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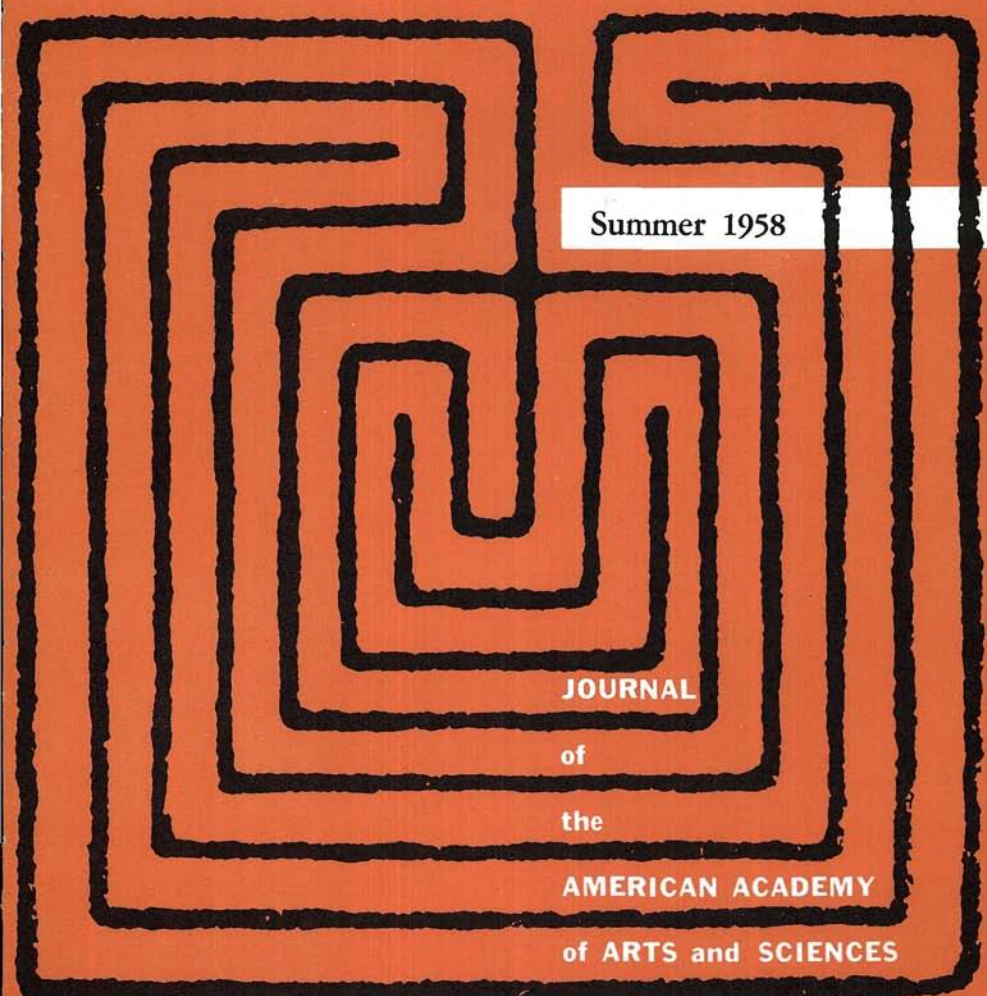
SYMBOLISM IN RELIGION AND LITERATURE



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The Religious Symbol*

PAUL TILLICH

1. THE SYMBOL

THE RELIGIOUS SYMBOL combines the general characteristics of the symbol with the peculiar characteristics it possesses as a religious symbol.

The first and basic characteristic of the symbol is its figurative quality. This implies that the inner attitude which is oriented to the symbol does not have the symbol itself in view but rather that which is symbolized in it. Moreover, that which is symbolized can itself in turn be a symbol for something of a higher rank. Hence, the written character can be called a symbol for the word and the word a symbol for its meaning. Devotion to the crucifix is really directed to the crucifixion on Golgotha and devotion to the latter is in reality intended for the redemptive action of God, which is itself a symbolic expression for an experience of what concerns us ultimately.

The second characteristic of the symbol is its perceptibility. This implies that something which is intrinsically invisible, ideal, or transcendent is made perceptible in the symbol and is in this way given objectivity. The perceptibility of the symbol need not be sensuous. It can just as well be something imaginatively conceived, as in the example already given of the crucifixion or as in poetic figures. Even abstract concepts can become symbols if their use involves a perceptible element. Thus perhaps the concept of "surplus value" as a symbol of economic exploitation in the consciousness of the proletariat or the idea of the "Supreme Being" as a symbol of the ultimate concern in the consciousness of the religious community may serve as examples.

The third characteristic of the symbol is its innate power. This implies that the symbol has a power inherent within it that distinguishes it from the mere sign which is impotent in itself. This characteristic is the most important one. It gives to the symbol the

* Based on an article with the same title in *The Journal of Liberal Religion*, Vol. II (1940), pp. 13-33, translated by James Luther Adams, with the assistance of Ernst Fraenkel.

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reality which it has almost lost in ordinary usage, as the phrase "only a symbol" shows. This characteristic is decisive for the distinction between a sign and a symbol. The sign is interchangeable at will. It does not arise from necessity, for it has no inner power. The symbol, however, does possess a necessary character. It cannot be exchanged. It can only disappear when, through dissolution, it loses its inner power. Nor can it be merely constructed; it can only be created. Words and signs originally had a symbolic character. They conveyed the meaning which they expressed, with an inherent power of their own. In the course of evolution and as a result of the transition from the mystical to the technical view of the world, they have lost their symbolic character, though not entirely. Once having lost their innate power they became signs. The pictorial symbols of religious art were originally charged with a magical power, with the loss of which they became a conventional sign-language and almost forfeited their genuine symbolic character.

The fourth characteristic of the symbol is its acceptability as such. This implies that the symbol is socially rooted and socially supported. Hence it is not correct to say that a thing is first a symbol and then gains acceptance; the process of becoming a symbol and the acceptance of it as a symbol belong together. The act by which a symbol is created is a social act, even though it first springs forth in an individual. The individual can devise signs for his own private needs; he cannot make symbols. If something becomes a symbol for him, it is always so in relation to the community which in turn can recognize itself in it. This fact is clearly evident in creedal symbols which at first are merely the signs by means of which the members of the group recognize each other. "Symbolics" is the science of the distinctive marks of the different churches, that is, the science of creedal distinctions. But all other symbols could also be considered in this light. Thus universal "symbolics" is conceivable as a general science of the self expressions of all groups, tendencies, and communities.

These general characteristics of the symbol hold for the religious symbol also, as the various examples show. Religious symbols are distinguished from others by the fact that they are a representation of that which is unconditionally beyond the conceptual sphere, they point to the ultimate reality implied in the religious act, to what concerns us ultimately. All other symbols either stand for something that has also an unsymbolic objective existence aside from

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its ideal significance, as, for example, a flag can represent a king, and the king in turn represents the state; or they are the forms giving expression to an invisible thing that has no existence except in its symbols, as for example, cultural creations like works of art, scientific concepts, and legal forms. It is only in symbolic fashion that such intangible things as these can be given expression at all.

The situation is essentially different with religious symbols. They must express an object that by its very nature transcends everything in the world that is split into subjectivity and objectivity. A real symbol points to an object which never can become an object. Religious symbols represent the transcendent but do not make the transcendent immanent. They do not make God a part of the empirical world.

2. THEORIES OF THE RELIGIOUS SYMBOL

The theories of the religious symbol are valid also in many respects for the symbol in general. In the consideration of these theories, however, we shall always come to a point where the independent and specific problems of the religious symbol will arise and require a solution. The theories of the symbol can be classified into negative and positive theories. The negative theories are those that interpret the symbol as reflecting an aspect of reality that is not consciously intended in the symbol. They deny that the symbol has an objective reference and attribute to it merely a subjective character. A definite subjective state and not the actual facts referred to in the symbol is expressed in the symbol. These theories are especially dangerous for religious symbols, since the latter do not refer to a world of objects, yet they intend to express a reality and not merely the subjective character of a religious individual.

On scientific and systematic grounds these theories are ultimately reducible to two types: the psychological and the sociological theory of the symbol. Both types have acquired historical significance because they have effectively, though one-sidedly, recognized one aspect of the development of symbols: they have shown that the psychological and social situation is decisive for the selection of symbols in all spheres. Going beyond this, they attempt also to show that symbols have no other reality than to serve as an expression of the psychological and social situation; that is, these negative theories set forth a genetic theory of the symbol itself. The two

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prophetic personalities of the nineteenth century, Nietzsche and Marx, gave the decisive impulse to this tendency.[1] This fact indicates that these theories are devised for combat and that they aim to do away with something, to destroy a symbol-complex. The object of their attack is the symbolism of bourgeois society including that of the churches supported by bourgeois society. The means employed in their attack is the argument that these symbols are an expression of a definite will to power and have no other reality than that which is conferred upon them by this will to power.

Marx used the expression "ideology" to describe this function of symbols and he made it into an unprecedentedly powerful political symbol. Symbols are ideologies. The intellectual content, that is, the objective reference of symbols, or that which is expressed in them, is a political subterfuge that is consciously or unconsciously created for the sake of dominance. This thesis has not, to be sure, been followed up by a tested application in the various fields of symbolism. Wherever this has been attempted (and it was not done in the writings of Marx), the result has been a complete failure.

Wherever there has been a discussion of the inherent character of symbols and of their effect upon the social situation, the more rigid theory has been relinquished and the objective reference of symbols has been recognized. This retreat is unavoidable, for a consistent carrying through of the theory would brand the theory along with its political symbolical power as itself an ideology that could only make the claim to be an expression of the proletarian social situation, but by no means an expression of real relationships. Thus the symbol "ideology" would itself be an ideology. It would also remain inconceivable how the will to power could make use of different kinds of symbols, if a cogent relevance to the facts were not inherent in the symbols.[2]

The theory of symbols deriving from Nietzsche has in our day received substantial support from the psychology of the unconscious (depth psychology). The Freudian analysis of the unconscious in a similar way interprets cultural and religious symbols as arising out of unconscious processes. The obscure and mysterious realm of dreams is held to be a symbol area of the first order. When we examine the unconscious, we see the no less mysterious symbols of mythology in a clearer light. All symbols are interpreted as sublimations of vital and instinctive impulses which have been repressed. This interpretation has been employed with greatest

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success in connection with those symbols that are lacking in any objective foundations, like the dream and the myth. In this way they are deprived of their objective reference.

But this theory has not been carried out consistently either. In the concept of sublimation the problem is concealed rather than solved; for this conception implies not only a pointing up or refining of the instinctive impulses but also a turning of the impulses towards areas of reality that, so far as their content is concerned, have nothing to do with impulses. Therefore an earnest attempt at carrying out the theory has never been made so far as it concerns the symbols that have objective reference. This holds especially for the science of psychoanalysis whose own inherent character is all too clearly the basis that supports the whole theory. Before it one always comes to a halt—and just for the same reason as obtains for the theory of ideology. All the more insistently, however, the question is raised by the psychology of the unconscious, concerning those symbols that have no objective empirical basis.

When psychoanalysis, for example, interprets the use of the father symbol in reference to God as an expression of the analytical father-complex (just as sociology on its part interprets it as an indication of the dominance of the male), we must raise the question as to how far the significance of this explanation extends. Obviously no further than its next assertion: that the *selection* of this symbol is to be explained by the father-complex. But the interpretation that in general the setting up of religious symbols is determined by complexes, is not valid. In other words, a theory of the religious symbol is not given but rather a theory as to how religious symbols are selected. Nor is anything more than this possible; for the positing of an unconditioned transcendent can by no means be explained on the basis of the conditioned and immanent impulses of the unconscious. But the final thing has not yet been said on the question of the selection of religious symbols; the possibility has not been taken into account that the vital impulses which induce the selection of the father symbol are themselves the operation of a primordial shaping of life, and therefore the intuition of the Unconditioned in this symbol expresses a truth which, though limited, is yet an ultimate, and therefore a religious, truth. The same thing would hold also for the sociological theory of the selection of symbols. Psychological and social impulses control the selection; but they can themselves be viewed as symbols for an ultimate metaphysical structure

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of existence. This consideration deprives these theories of their negative implications even when they are correct, namely, in their explanation of the *selection* of symbols.

With the consideration of the cultural-morphological interpretation of symbols we make a transition from the negative to the positive theories. In common with the negative theories, they make the selection of symbols dependent upon a subjective factor, the soul of the culture. But this factor is not, as it is asserted to be by the negative theories, unrelated to the objective reference of the symbols, but rather has an essential relation to it. Indeed, it is by means of this relationship that the subjective factor is defined as "the soul of the culture." The vital and the cultural are not separate from each other, but rather they constitute a unity within the creative, formative principle of a culture. All cultural creations are symbols for a definite, psychic, formative principle. This symbolic character does not, however, negate its objectivity.

The central phenomenon of the cultural-morphological theory is "style." In the style of works of art, concepts, legal forms, and the like, the soul of the culture from which they derive, finds expression. By means of this conception of style all aspects or forms of cultural life become symbols.[3] The morphologist of culture is concerned with style and not with the precise details of the development of a culture. Thus he will incur the strictures we have associated with the negative theory. Indeed, he must do so, if he looks upon morphology as an absolute principle, that is, if he denies all objective connection between the creations of the different cultural epochs. In this theory he exposes himself to the danger that his theory will itself be interpreted only as a symbol for a psychological-cultural situation. At least when dealing with his own science he too must come to a halt.

The symbols that are most of all threatened by this theory are those symbols that possess no objective references and can be interpreted as immediate forms of expression of the soul of the culture and as such can be interpreted as detached from every realm of fact. Against this threat we must assert: the fact that the soul must express itself religiously when it expresses itself immediately, cannot be explained in any other way than by the fact that the soul is religious, that the relation to the unconditioned transcendent is essential or constitutive for it. The fact that religious symbols are distinguished from all others in power of expression and immediacy, can be explained only by the fact that that which pertains to the soul, and

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this holds also for the soul of a culture, must be defined precisely by the relation to the unconditioned transcendent. When this "soul" —apart from all objective, empirical relations—expresses itself, it does so religiously. It is in this context that the connection between the vital and the cultural elements in the "soul" can be understood, namely, from the fact that each element, in transcending itself, meets the other at the point of transcendence: the vital element, by breaking through its own immediacy (for which perhaps the instinct of death, as maintained by Freud, is an expression, although it is absolutely incomprehensible on the basis of the vital); the cultural element, insofar as none of its forms can be exempt from the crisis that they encounter as a result of the demands of the objective world as well as of the meaning of life itself. This fact explains how a "style" of culture possesses a symbolic power that has religious significance. Insofar as the psychic element or the "soul" is expressed in the style, the relation to the unconditioned transcendent is expressed in it. The sphere of religion insofar as it is expressed in symbols embraces the whole autonomous culture.[4] Thus a science of the symbolics of culture worked out from the religious point of view, becomes a necessary task. Naturally this consideration has to do with only one side of culture. The various independent spheres of things remain intact; the symbolic character of cultural creation is "broken" by its objective, empirical character. The symbolism of style is a "broken," indirectly religious symbolism. But it is for this very reason that it has a fundamental significance for the understanding of the religious symbol in general.

We have presupposed the difference between the symbolic and the objective character of cultural creations. This conception, however, is opposed by the critical-idealistic theory of the symbol. The latter identifies the symbolic and the objective character and thereby gives to the concept of the symbol a new form and a tremendous extension. As a result of the work of Cassirer, this conception today stands in the foreground of symbol theory. We shall combine the exposition and criticism of this theory with an exposition and criticism of Cassirer's theory of mythical symbols.

The myth is viewed as a definite form of the cultural interpretation of existence and thus, in accordance with idealistic presuppositions, it is viewed as an objective creation. A symbolic reality is attributed to the laws according to which myths are formed. The myth is classified along with the other cultural spheres that are also

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manifested in symbols, such as language, philosophy, art, etc. The subject-matter of myth is therefore not to be considered as in any special way symbolic. It has a symbolic element in common with all cultural creations; for a cultural life exists only in symbols. To be sure, a pre-cultural and pre-symbolic world of intuition does exist, but not a reality transcendent to symbols. Cultural reality is in its essence symbolic reality; not because in itself it reflects a reality but rather because, being free from the relation to any thing-in-itself beyond the empirical, it creates a world of cultural objects. At this point we shall turn aside from the epistemological problem and raise the question as to how mythical and religious symbolism are related to each other. The answer given by critical idealism is that originally mythical and religious symbolism are interfused. But gradually religious symbolism rises above mythical symbolism, struggles against it and overcomes it. This answer grasps the problem and formulates it. But it does not contain the solution: if mythology is in its essence a cultural creation like science, art, law, it is difficult to understand why it should be destroyed, indeed it is impossible that it should decline, for it has its own proper and necessary place in the meaningful structure of cultural life. If religion, on the other hand, is an autonomous area of meaning, we must ask how it is possible that it was originally embedded in myth. In short, the evolutionary and the transcendental conceptions of the myth contradict each other.

This tension is resolved as soon as it is pointed out that the myth, far from having disappeared, has only altered its form. Thus the conflict between religion and myth would not be a conflict with myth as such but rather of one particular myth with another. And this is what appears to me to be the case. The struggle of the Jewish prophets against pagan mythology was a struggle of the ethical henotheism of the old religion of the desert against the ecstatic polytheism of agrarian religion, a struggle of Jahwism against Baalism. But the mythical element is just as active in the religion of Jahwe as in the religion of Baal. To be sure, something has happened to bring in question the myth in its immediacy: the Jahwe myth is an historical myth, that is, it is related to the empirical realities of history. It has the realism of the historical. Yet transcendence has in a radical fashion insinuated itself into the mythical figure of Jahwe. Jahwe acquires the unconditionedness which is intended in the religious act. But the myth is not thereby removed. Empirical history remains always related to a super-empirical, a transcendent history, which

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extends from the primitive period of innocence on beyond Jahwe's choice of his people to the end of history. Unconditioned transcendence as such is not perceptible. If it is to be perceived—and it must be so in religion—it can be done only in mythical conceptions. Of course these mythical ideas thereby lose their immediate meaning, they point beyond themselves, just as, conversely, history, when interpreted mythically, always remains real history demanding actual decisions. Nor does mysticism eliminate the myth, though it has broken the immediately mythical consciousness, for example, in India. The highest concept of even an abstractly transcendent mysticism has necessarily a mythical element still within it. The lower forms of the myth are not negated but are rather deprived of their ultimate reality just as all real facts are deprived of their actuality. The mythical consciousness can therefore be either broken or unbroken; in any case, it does not disappear. If one decides to characterize only the unbroken mythical mentality as mythical, then of course the myth is overcome in religion and it is shown to be non-essential. If, on the other hand, one calls every intuition of transcendence mythical, then there is no such thing as an unmythical attitude and the myth is shown to be essential. The usage is unsettled, presumably not because of the lack of scientific clarification but because of the inner dialectic that characterizes the concept of myth.

The objects of mythical intuition are at the same time the objects of scientific and philosophical investigation. With the appearance of science they enter as such into a new dialectic. There begins a transformation of the objects of mythical intuition into objects of mere empirical experience. A separate objective world arises and confronts the rational, perceiving subject. As a result, the subjective factor which is adapted to all immediately mythical data, the inner living connection of the consciousness with everything existing and with the inwardness of everything real, disappears or is repressed. Insofar as science thus builds up its own world of objects, it repels the myth. But, for the purpose of constructing this world of "things," science needs concepts that are transcendent to reality. In this way science comes into a new mythical situation and itself becomes myth-creative; thus concepts like evolution, will to power, life, etc., have a mythical character. They no longer serve only for the construction of the empirical order, but rather indicate the transcendent presuppositions of this order. But since the element of the Unconditioned is firmly implanted in each of these presup-

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positions, and since the presupposition of all thinking (which is below the "abyss of being"), signifies both the limits and the abyss of objectification, there comes into science an element of the religious, mythical mentality. Hence, it is possible for the ultimate presuppositions of science to be classed with the highest concepts of abstract mysticism or of abstract monotheism. In this way there arises an abstract myth that is no less a myth than a concrete one, even if it is broken in its immediacy. Indeed, the living meaning of creative metaphysics is that it involves just such an abstract myth. And from this fact it derives both its doubtful character as a science and its religious power.

Under these circumstances one must reject the classification of mythology as an independent type of symbol-creation different from science and religion. In both science and religion mythology is an element that cannot be eliminated, even though it may be broken. Plato recognizes this when on the one hand he puts science in opposition to myth and on the other must acknowledge the indispensability of myth to science. All metaphysics reaches a point where its concepts are myths not only in fact but even in the sound of its words. The myth is, therefore, an essential element of everything in the intellectual and cultural sphere. Nevertheless it is necessary to distinguish between the unbroken and the broken form of the myth. In the unbroken myth three elements are linked together: the religious, the scientific, and the truly mythical elements: the religious element as relatedness to the unconditioned transcendent, the scientific as relatedness to objective reality, the truly mythical as an objectification of the transcendent through the medium of intuitions and conceptions of reality. This unity was possible only so long as the unconditionedness of the religious transcendent and the rationality of the world of things were hidden from consciousness. Thus the creations of the mythical consciousness could appear as satisfying both the religious and the scientific claim (of course, the contrast between religion and science as such was not evident at that time). This situation could not continue indefinitely. The breaking down of this unity signifies a transition into an autonomous religion and into an autonomous science, and thus it signifies the breaking down of the original mythical mentality. At the same time, however, the mythical stands forth in its purity and in its true character, as a necessary element in the construction of a meaningful reality. Thus it becomes clear that the myth is the central concept of those symbols

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in which the unconditioned transcendent is envisaged either mediately or immediately.

On this basis not only the original connection of the myth with religion and with a general awareness and understanding of the world becomes intelligible, but also the fact that the myth by its very nature must always strive to achieve again this original unity. Wherever the objective world is recognized in its relatedness to the unconditioned transcendent, and wherever the unconditioned transcendent is interpreted from the point of view of the objective world, the unity of religion with the desire to understand the world is restored in the mythical symbol. Thus science becomes a myth despite its rational autonomy, and religion absorbs certain aspects of the understanding and knowledge of the world, despite its own transcendent autonomy, in order in these ways to sense the transcendent. In our time, however, this development is more a tendency than a reality. Its success would involve a thoroughgoing transformation of both the scientific and the religious mentality.[5]

It must not be supposed that mythical symbols constitute one sphere of symbols beside other spheres. For, in contrast to the others, they are "unfounded" symbols, that is, they are determined essentially by their symbolic character. If it is presupposed in accordance with critical idealism that cultural creations do not give expression to a thing-in-itself, but rather that reality is the cultural and objective sphere constituted by these creations, then it is quite clear that the world of mythical objects has an imaginary and figurative character entirely different from that of the world of artistic objects. The work of art expresses wholly intrinsically the reality that it aims to express. The work of art as a figurative thing does not point beyond itself to a reality of a different order. When it tries to do so, as in symbolic art, a special intention is present, the peculiarity of which shows that art as such does not create symbols but rather a meaningful reality of its own. In so far as it has a symbolic character, it acquires a mythical character also. It surrenders its own character as pure art in order to express a transcendent meaning. The same thing is true for science. The attempt to present a historical figure as a symbol raises this figure to the mythical level and gives to the empirically historical a certain figurative character in favor of its transcendent meaning. The fact that the view here alluded to is advocated only by a small group of historians (the school of the poet Stefan George) again indicates that

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science, although it does create its own peculiar structures of meaning, does not create symbols. (The secondary level of linguistic and written sign-symbols does not come into consideration for our question.) If, nevertheless, the meaning structures of art and science are called symbols, no other objection can be made to this usage than that one must search for a new word for symbol in the narrower sense. The category of the mythical, therefore, includes essentially that of the symbolic, and that in distinction from the other areas of meaning which include the symbolic exactly to the degree that they are subservient to the mythical. That this connection is never completely absent has been shown by the discussion of the symbolic character of "style."

The fact that mythical symbols are from the objective, empirical point of view without a basis—even when cultural creations are involved—and the fact that they are for this reason symbols in the genuine sense, indicates the inadequacy of critical idealism. In its place we propose a transcendent realism. The thing referred to in the mythical symbol is the unconditioned transcendent, the source of both existence and meaning, which transcends being-in-itself as well as being-for-us. On the basis of this presupposition, which cannot be further dealt with here, the ensuing discussion of the religious symbol will proceed.

3. TYPES OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

We distinguish two levels of religious symbols, a supporting level in which religious objectivity is established and which is based in itself; and a level supported by it and pointing to objects of the other level. Accordingly we call the symbols of the first level the "objective religious symbols" and those of the second level, the "self-transcending religious symbols." The objective religious symbols will occupy the central place in our discussion. Indeed, all the previous discussion has been concerned with them. They are themselves to be subdivided into several groups.

The first and basic level of objective religious symbolism is the world of divine beings which, after the "breaking" of the myth, is "the Supreme Being," God. The divine beings and the Supreme Being, God, are representations of that which is ultimately referred to in the religious act. They are representations, for the unconditioned transcendent surpasses every possible conception of a

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being, including even the conception of a Supreme Being. In so far as any such being is assumed as existent, it is again annihilated in the religious act. In this annihilation, in this atheism immanent in the religious act, the profoundest aspect of the religious act is manifest. Wherever this aspect is lost sight of, there results an objectification of the Unconditioned (which is in essence opposed to objectification), a result which is destructive of the religious as well as of the cultural life. Thus God is made into a "thing" that is not a real thing but a contradiction in terms and an absurdity; demanding belief in such a thing is demanding a religious "work," a sacrifice, an act of asceticism and the self-destruction of the human mind. It is the religious function of atheism ever to remind us that the religious act has to do with the unconditioned transcendent, and that the representations of the Unconditioned are not objects concerning whose existence or non-existence a discussion would be possible.

This oscillation between the setting up and the destruction of the religious object expresses itself immediately in the living idea of God. It is indeed true that the religious act really signifies what it refers to: it signifies God. But the word "God" involves a double meaning: it connotes the unconditioned transcendent, the ultimate, and also an object somehow endowed with qualities and actions. The first is not figurative or symbolic, but is rather in the strictest sense what it is said to be. The second, however, is really symbolic, figurative. It is the second that is the object envisaged by the religious consciousness. The idea of a Supreme Being possessing certain definite qualities is present in the consciousness. But the religious consciousness is also aware of the fact that when the word "God" is heard, this idea is figurative, that it does not signify an object, that is, it must be transcendent. The word "God" produces a contradiction in the consciousness, it involves something figurative that is present in the consciousness and something not figurative that we really have in mind and that is represented by this idea. In the word "God" is contained at the same time that which actually functions as a representation and also the idea that it is *only* a representation. It has the peculiarity of transcending its own conceptual content: upon this depends the numinous character that the word has in science and in life in spite of every misuse through false objectification. God as an object is a representation of the reality ultimately referred to in the religious act, but in the word "God"

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this objectivity is negated and at the same time its representative character is asserted.

The second group of objective religious symbols has to do with characterizations of the nature and actions of God. Here God is presupposed as an object. And yet these characterizations have an element in them that indicates the figurative character of that presupposition. Religiously and theologically, this fact is expressed in the awareness that all knowledge of God has a symbolic character. The question concerning the reality and the real differentiation of the attributes of God likewise indicates that we are concerned with symbols here. But this by no means signifies that these statements are lacking in truth or that these symbols are interchangeable at will. Genuine symbols are not interchangeable at all, and real symbols provide no objective knowledge, but yet a true awareness. Therefore, the religious consciousness does not doubt the possibility of a true awareness of God. The criterion of the truth of a symbol naturally cannot be the comparison of it with the reality to which it refers, just because this reality is absolutely beyond human comprehension. The truth of a symbol depends on its inner necessity for the symbol-creating consciousness. Doubts concerning its truth show a change of mentality, a new attitude toward the unconditioned transcendent. The only criterion that is at all relevant is this: that the Unconditioned is clearly grasped in its unconditionedness. A symbol that does not meet this requirement and that elevates a conditioned thing to the dignity of the Unconditioned, even if it should not be false, is demonic.

The third group of objective symbols are the natural and historical objects that are drawn as holy objects into the sphere of religious objects and thus become religious symbols. In the foreground stand the historical personalities that have become the object of a religious act. It would of course be entirely contradictory to the religious consciousness if one characterized these personalities, or what they did and what happened to them, as symbols. For the peculiarity of this kind of object of the religious consciousness depends precisely upon their historical reality, their reality in the objective sense. The use of symbolism with regard to this world in which the holy is supposed to be really present would involve a denial of its presence and hence the destruction of its existence. And yet this denial is inevitable as soon as these holy realities are looked upon as being rationally objective. For in the context of the rational world of

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concrete objects they have no place. And if it were possible to give them such a place, for instance, with the help of occultism, the thing aimed at in the religious act, that is, the intuition of the unconditioned transcendent, would not be grasped. These historical personalities, insofar as they are considered as symbols, therefore, have no place in the objective world. More than this, they cannot have such a place even though it be to their advantage as historical figures. This signifies, however, that these objects that possess a holy character are not empirical, even if they can only be conceived of as existing in the empirical order. This means that they are symbols, they represent the presence of the unconditioned transcendent in the empirical order. That this presence is viewed as an empirical event (for example, the resurrection), indicates the figurative character that attaches to every objectification of the transcendent. It is therefore correct to say that Christ or the Buddha, for example, in so far as the unconditioned transcendent is envisaged in them, are symbols. But they are symbols that have at the same time an empirical, historical aspect and in whose symbolic meaning the empirical is involved. Therefore both aspects, the empirical and the transcendent, are manifest in this kind of symbols and their symbolic power depends upon this fact. The same thing holds for them as for the name of God: all of these are symbolic, and in such a way that in both cases the unsymbolic reality is expressed—in the one case, the empirical, in the other, the transcendent. It is the task of historical criticism, which runs along parallel to atheistic criticism, to prevent these groups of symbols from degenerating into false objectifications. Religion is greatly indebted to modern research on the life of Jesus, in that it has accomplished this task by recognizing the problematic character of the empirical element and by emphasizing the importance of the symbolic element. It is never possible, however, to alter or to re-create a symbol by means of historical criticism. This group of symbols can also be measured by the standard of how effectively the unconditioned transcendent is expressed in them. The rise and decline of symbols is a matter of the religious and not of the scientific mentality.

The third group of objective religious symbols involves the level of symbols that we have characterized as "pointing" symbols. It is the immensely large class of signs and actions of a special significance that contain a reference to religious objects of the first level. This whole class of symbols can be divided into actions on the one

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hand and objects on the other that symbolize the religious attitude. In the first category belong, for example, all cultic gestures, to the second, all illustrative symbols, such as the cross, arrows and the like. An elaboration of this class of symbols would be tantamount to working out a theory of the phenomena of religion in general. This is not at the moment feasible. Only one point significant for the principle in question may be mentioned here. All these symbols can be conceived as objective symbols of the third group reduced to a lower power. They all had originally more than "pointing" significance. They were holy objects or actions laden with magical sacramental power. To the degree in which their magical-sacramental power was reduced in favor of the unconditioned transcendent on the one side, and in the direction of the objectification of their reality on the other, they were brought down to the level of the "pointing" symbol. This process is never wholly completed. Even in radically critical religions like Judaism and Protestantism the conservatism of the religious mentality has preserved the magical-sacramental attitude toward reality. Concerning the other great forms of religion it is much better to be silent. Even in the mere "pointing" symbols, so long as they are living, there remains a residue of their original sacral power. If this is wholly lost, it is no longer justifiable to speak of symbols; the symbol is now replaced by conventional idioms which may then be raised by means of religious art into the purely esthetic sphere. And this can happen not only to divine signs and attributes but also to the divine beings themselves, as history has demonstrated. This observation leads to the conclusion that the second level of religious symbols, the "pointing" symbols, are transitional in character. And this is based on the nature of things. So long as symbols are imbued with sacral power the religious act is oriented toward them. When the religious act is no longer oriented toward them, that is, when they lose their sacral power, they degenerate into mere signs. This transition, however, involves so large an area of the religious life that one is justified in assigning to it a special place. At all events, this one conclusion is evident, that the real religious symbol is the objective symbol, which in its three groups represents the unconditioned transcendent.

4. THE RISE AND DECLINE OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

Religious symbols are created in the course of the historical

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process of religion. The inner impulse of this historical process has been made clear through the consideration of the myth. It is a tendency that is two-fold, toward religious transcendence and toward cultural objectification. Religious criticism manifests itself in the opposition of the divine and the demonic. As a result of this criticism religious symbols are forced inevitably into the status of the demonic. At first their reality is not destroyed, but it is weakened; the real symbolic power lives on in the sphere of the divine. The thus weakened demonic symbols can still have a long life; eventually, however, they tend to withdraw and become mere signs, or wholly to disappear.[6] Scientific criticism does not in itself have the power to make religious symbols disappear. Wherever it seems to have this power, a deflection in the religious consciousness has already taken place. Wherever scientific criticism is effective, it leads not to a demonization, but rather to a profanization of the symbols. The decisive means for bringing about the profanization of symbols is the exposing of their symbolic character. For this reason the religious consciousness always protests against the characterization of its objects as symbols. In this respect nothing is changed by proving that reality can, indeed must be embraced in the symbol. The shimmering quality that attaches to all objects to which the concept of the symbol is applied can, by the peculiarly religious sense for reality, be recognized only as a negation of its reality. Thus the question arises as to what can be or become a religious symbol in the cultural situation of our day.

On the whole the situation is such that the contents of categories arising out of the scientific and philosophic mode of creating concepts have the immediate persuasive power that fits them to become symbols. The fact that in the most highly educated circles the attitude of certainty towards scientific concepts is shattered and that the mythical character of these concepts is recognized, does not even in these circles greatly affect the self-evident symbolic power of these concepts. The idea of God illustrates the kind of change to which religious symbols have been subjected. The idea of God has by misuse through objectification lost its symbolic power in such measure that it serves largely as a concealment of the unconditioned transcendent rather than as a symbol for it. The recognition of this, its unobjective, symbolic character, has a chance of influence only insofar as the "ring" of the unconditioned transcendent can still be heard in the word "God." Where this is not the case, the proof that

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the intellectual content of the idea of God is symbolic can only hasten its loss of power.

This situation with regard to religious symbols, a situation which is fraught with great danger, may give rise to the desire to treat that which is referred to in the symbol without using symbols. Of course this cannot mean that beyond all symbols the unconditioned transcendent should be directly intuited. Rather it signifies that reality should no longer be used as material for symbols. It signifies that reality itself should be looked at immediately and be spoken of in such a way that its position in and before the unconditioned transcendent would receive direct expression. Undoubtedly, it might well be the highest aim of theology to find the point where reality speaks simultaneously of itself and of the Unconditioned in an unsymbolic fashion, to find the point where the unsymbolic reality itself becomes a symbol, where the contrast between reality and symbol is suspended. If this were really possible, the deepest demand of the religious consciousness would be fulfilled: religion would no longer be a separate thing. This in no way signifies, however, that religion should be reduced to an artistic or scientific approach to reality. It signifies rather an immediate concern with things in so far as they confront us unconditionally, that is, in so far as they stand in the transcendent.

But against this idea, which would involve especially in our day a great unburdening of the religious consciousness, an emancipation from the burden of a symbolism that has lost its self-evident character, there arises a serious objection: the idea rests on the presupposition that an unmythical treatment of the unconditioned transcendent provides the religious possibility of fully penetrating reality. This possibility, however, presupposes that reality stands in God, that is, that reality is eschatological and not present. In our time the idea prevails that certain realities with symbolic power must be placed above other realities without symbolic power; this very fact indicates that reality as a whole is separated from what it ought to be, and is not transparent of its ultimate meaning. Only insofar as this were the case, would reality itself acquire symbolic power and thus the realm of special symbols would become unnecessary: reality and symbol would become identical.[7]

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REFERENCES

1. Cf. my book *The Religious Situation,* trans. H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1932), for an estimate of Nietzsche and Marx.
2. Cf. the general epistemological treatment of the concept of ideology in Karl Mannheim's book, *Ideology and Utopia,* and my review of this book in the October 1929 number of *Gesellschaft.*
3. Thus we can speak of a "style of thought" and conceive of the history of philosophy as a history partly of a typical, partly of a changing, style of thought. This can lead to important insights if it is carried out with due attention to the singularity of historical events and to the claim to validity asserted by every philosophical idea.
4. This is the basic thesis of my *Philosophy of Religion;* cf. my address "Ueber die Idee einer Theologie der Kultur," *Vortraege der Kantstudien,* 2nd ed. 1921, and my *Religionsphilosophie* in Dessoir's *Lehrbuch der Philosophie,* 1925.
5. All the talk about the "new myth" is an indication of how remote the new myth is in actuality. A myth that is sought for as myth is for that very reason repelled. Only when one's thinking has objective reference can a truly mythical element pulsate through it.
6. The Calvinist criticism of the mass (as "accursed idolatry") forces it into the demonic and makes the eucharist a mere "pointing" symbol: the beginning of its disappearance. The question may be raised—and it has been raised by critics of this essay—whether every religious symbol is necessarily subject to the process of destruction. This question cannot be decided *in abstracto.* The possibility that a symbol, freeing itself from all its demonizations and profanizations, will come to life again through the power inherent in it, is always a real possibility *in abstracto.* Whether it becomes a reality depends upon the actual faith of the time, whose ways are not to be determined *a priori* nor on the basis of something extraneous to it.
7. This section is the most important and the most questionable of the entire essay. In my essay on "Belief-ful Realism" I have attempted to accomplish the same thing, namely, a language without symbols. Perhaps it is a sign of the maturity of our religious development that its prophetic word—so far as any such is used—grasps the transcendent without symbol, just as it is a sign of the genius of great poets that they have at their command words that are both unsymbolic and precise and nevertheless penetrate into the deepest levels of our existence. Examples of this may perhaps be found in the later poems of Rilke and in some of the writings of Werfel. The word "unsymbolic" here signifies, without a transcendent, objective symbol.

   The idea is that if God is all in all, there is no more need to speak of God in special symbols and even to use the word God. Speaking of things would mean speaking of the depth in which things are rooted and of the heights to which they are elevated. For me the greatest religious utterances are those in which this type of non-symbolic speaking is more or less reached. But they are rather rare and they must be rare, because our real situation is that of distance from God and not of God being all in all.

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The Cross: Social Trauma or Redemption

AMOS N. WILDER

Odour of blood when Christ was slain
Made all Platonic tolerance vain,
And vain all Doric discipline.

W. B. YEATS, "Two Songs from a Play" [1]

We think that this long night,
This cold eclipse, is shade cast from Christ's cross.

ELDER OLSON, *The Cock of Heaven* [2]

IN ANY discussion of symbolism the religious category may well receive attention. All the issues that arise in the study of cultural symbols appear here and with additional dimensions. If cultural symbols are both community-building and time-binding, religious symbols have an additional ultimacy of reference which adds to their power. If the media and vehicles of cultural self-identification undergo mutation, exhaustion, or renewal, these features of religious symbols have special interest. Of particular importance in connection with the latter is the way in which they lose touch with ongoing actuality and the consequences that follow both for the symbol and for the society in question. Also of interest is the new meaning that is often put into old religious symbols. In such cases we may have a radical revision in the understanding of the religious tradition, one which may be viewed ambiguously as either "heresy" or reformation. It is hoped that the following discussion of one of the major Christian symbols may illuminate some of these considerations.

CHRIST AND THE PSYCHOLOGISTS

When poets and novelists deal with the Christ-story and the scenes and personages of the Gospels, they unconsciously modernize just as historians and theologians do and even more freely. They see Christ in their own image or in the image of their preferred life-ideal and

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make the Gospels a sounding board for their own philosophy and ethic. Churchmen do the same thing, but they are to some extent controlled by their training in the evangelical history and by their own particular patterns of sectarian tradition. Such patterns, diverse and dated as they often are, nevertheless rule out some forms of fanciful freewheeling.

There is, indeed, a sense in which every significant portrayal of Christ must be a modernization. The "distance" between Nazareth and Detroit, between the first century and the twentieth, must be bridged. But re-portrayal should not be betrayal. Christ in modern dress is rarely convincing, though he has his incognitos in all times. The best attempts to present him on the modern scene are the most indirect, as in the case of Georges Duhamel's superlative short story "Élévation et mort d'Armand Branche."[8] Here we have an allusive suggestion of Christ in the trenches in World War I which is all the more effective because it is not pressed. But the poet-Christ of Renan or of William Ellery Leonard, the antinomian oracle of Nietzsche and of Gide, the "man of genius" of Middleton Murray, the "Comrade Jesus" of some Marxists, the esoteric initiate of George Moore and now of Robert Graves, and the pacifist-anarchist of Faulkner's *Fable:* all such are modernizations which only show how we are led to delineate the past (as the future), each in terms of his own contemporary urgency. The unhappy result of this perennial practice is that in every decade men instruct Christ as to what he was and is instead of allowing themselves to be instructed by him.

The literary interpreter of the life of Christ, as one who waives usually both the relevant historical study and the theological tradition, is doubly vulnerable to the contemporary *Zeitgeist* in all spiritual matters. As an intellectual this means that he is more or less captive to the particular reigning science and its popularizers: in the current situation, psychology. As Darwinism produced its interpreters of Jesus and his influence, so more recently Freudianism has done the same thing, usually in conjunction with the influence of Sir James Frazer. First came the clinical demonstrations of the insanity of Jesus which Albert Schweitzer answered definitively in his doctoral dissertation at Strasbourg. Then came the portrayals of the Nazarene healer as the first psychiatrist. More generally his saving death and resurrection have been fitted into a slot in this or that schema of redeemer-archetypes provided by cultural studies

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in myth and ritual, and so evacuated of any distinctive significance. The layman, including the most sophisticated philosophers and social scientists, notes that the terminology of seasonal fertility rites and the symbols of gnostic regeneration occur in the New Testament. But they have not recognized the decisive underlying difference between faith based on revelation through historical experience and religion based on nature or on nature and the soul. What the cosmos can tell us about ultimates—whether the constellations or the fertility-cycles of living forms—is very little compared with what man's social and moral experience can teach him. And what the psyche and the spirit can teach in whatever form of mysticism or seizure, exalting as it may be, is again little as compared with the tuition of the heart and its loyalties.

Thus the most common occasion for misconception of Christ today among intellectuals lies in the new psychology, especially in social psychology. This confusion is, however, abetted by the wide prevalence of morbid forms of Christianity which justify the social psychologist at many points.

These observations are preliminary to an examination of one modern literary presentation of Christ, that of the poet Robinson Jeffers in his poetic drama, *Dear Judas*.[4] We are interested here in one particular slant which the poet gives to the Gospel story, namely, his emphasis on suffering as the clue to the appeal of Christ and of Christianity. It is at this point that we may identify a preoccupation on the part of the interpreter derived from modern psychology. But we are also concerned with what to some extent justifies Jeffers' emphasis on this point: a widespread heresy of Christians evident in exaggeration of and even obsession with the Cross in its aspect of pain.

Through the centuries Christians have recurrently fallen into this kind of error. They have all too easily identified the Cross or the blood of Christ with mere suffering or let this motif play too large a part. What psychology sees on the one hand as masochism or on the other as sadism usurps an undue place in our understanding of the central event of Christianity. The consequences are seen in Christian art and ritual. Such a displacement of the real import of the Cross has its corollaries in various forms of sub-Christian asceticism, punitive attitudes or self-punishment, and orgiastic religious exercises. The dangers are not absent from forms of the faith which we think of as refined.

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This question of the Christian's attitude to suffering is a fundamental one. What is at stake can be discussed in terms of contemporary literature. Jeffers presents the plausible but surely mistaken view—and the thesis in the work under examination can be found in his other writings—that Christ's empire over the hearts of men through the centuries rests upon the sheer fascination of agony and upon men's thinly veiled obsession with cruelty. Yet this writer and others may be partly excused for this view in the light of a good deal of Christian history. In any case the topic looked at in literary works offers the possibility of some significant Christian discriminations.

A MODERN LUCRETIUS

We take *Dear Judas* as our main text but we may well give some prior attention to the work of this poet as a whole. Various factors combine to obscure the significance of his writing. Many readers are alienated by the violence and cruelty of the subject matter of his narrative poems. His unpopular political opinions openly voiced in his poetry have disaffected others. His art stands apart, moreover, from the kinds of poetry most appreciated in our period. Perhaps one feature of this isolation is to be found in his lack of inhibition in expressing a view and speaking in his own voice whether with respect to things political or more ultimate moralities. A reader of Jeffers should first free himself from any too limited definition of the art of verse, especially from the prestige of current critical opinion. He should then give his attention to the best of the narratives, which can be distinguished from those that are less successful. In the case of Jeffers this commonplace takes on a special importance. Finally the reader should allow himself to be interested in the philosophy of this poet, at least as an interesting option in our century for those who cannot accept the prevailing religious traditions but who are equally indisposed toward materialism and negation.

The position of Jeffers has, indeed, been identified with nihilism. This characterization is only proper if it is recognized that he only rejects and denies in order to carry out his main role of celebrant all the more effectively. His affirmation is in terms of a kind of cosmic mysticism which must be distinguished from all usual forms of pantheism, an attitude which he calls Inhumanism. The final appeal of his often perplexing narratives lies in their dramatization

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of triumph, triumph of some life-principle or world-principle through wounds, mutilation, and agony. The best of them take on the character, at least in their climaxes, of hymns of salvation.[5]

The reputation of this twentieth-century Cassandra waned after the twenties, when he won extravagant testimonies from a number of outstanding critics. Attention was again drawn to him after World War II by his version of the *Medea* of Euripides, which enjoyed a significant success in its New York production. A valuable new study of the poet has recently been published, *The Loyalties of Robinson Jeffers*, by Radcliffe Squires,[6] of the English Department of the University of Michigan. This book, to which we are particularly indebted, dissipates many confusions about this Californian Titan and his work, gives order to the various views that have been held about him and the influences that have been at work in his writing, draws clear lines between the better and the worse in the total output, and discusses reasonably the more controversial aspects of Jeffers' poetry and views.

There is no question that we have here an enormously talented writer and that as a figure in the cultural scene his stance and attitudes repay scrutiny. He illustrates the thesis that our nation will continue to produce its rebels and primitivists, its individualists of the frontiers (Jeffers identifies himself with "the West of the West") or the Big Woods or the Open Road, its new avatars of the American Adam uninitiated into law or church or restive under law and church, its Thoreaus and Whitmans, in every age. When this impulse is found in one so strongly marked with a Calvinist lineage it is doubly interesting. Radcliffe Squires's final category for Jeffers is that of a modern Lucretius, and this typing is illuminating, especially as it identifies well both the kind of cosmic *mystique* which finds expression in him and his scientific and rationalist leanings.

This writer's narrative poems are filled with violent actions, with unnatural crimes and with disgust of civilization. He sees the disorder of his characters as a dramatization of our fallen condition. He proclaims his gospel of Inhumanism—the glory of inhuman things which we also may share. He states his case as follows:

> It seems time that our race began to think as an adult does, rather than like an egocentric baby or insane person. This manner of thought and feeling is neither misanthropic nor pessimist, though two or three people have said so and may again. It involves no falsehoods, and is a means of

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maintaining sanity in slippery times; it has objective truth and human value. It offers a reasonable detachment as a rule of conduct, instead of love, hate and envy. It neutralizes fanaticism and wild hopes; but it provides magnificence for the religious instinct, and satisfies our need to admire greatness and rejoice in beauty. [7]

Jeffers' father was a professor of Old Testament literature in the Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh (Presbyterian). How many sons of talent born in the church have departed from the family faith in our time, yet always with some remaining indebtedness and distress! Jeffers' sonnet "To His Father" [8] contrasts movingly his own lacerated lot with the serenity of the parent:

> Christ was your lord and captain all your life,
> He fails the world but you he did not fail,
> He led you through all forms of grief and strife
> Intact, a man full-armed, he let prevail
> Nor outward malice not the worse-fanged snake,
> That coils in one's own brain against your calm,
> That great rich jewel well guarded for his sake
> With coronal age and death like quieting balm.
> I Father having followed other guides
> And oftener to my hurt no leader at all,
> Through years nailed up like dripping panther hides
> For trophies on a savage temple wall
> Hardly anticipate that reverend stage
> Of life, the snow-wreathed honor of extreme age.

Mr. Squires suggests that the grievous repudiation of what his father had stood for plays its part in the deeper imagery of the poems, especially that of "the destroying prodigal." The relation to the church today of its alienated sons is marked by ambivalence and is full of creative stress. Even when Jeffers writes what reads like a parody on the Gospel, namely his *Dear Judas,* it carries with it a profound homage to the Christ.

Like many agnostics of today, Jeffers' thought has been influenced by writers like Spengler. He sees the western world as well-advanced on a final phase of emptiness and internecine destruction. Civilization to him means death and has as its fruits both such sanguinary perversions and crimes of individuals as abound in his tales and modern war on a world scale as we have known it. His political poems castigate the loss of freedom and of deep-rooted religious integrity of the citizen. The poem "Shine, Perishing Republic" [9] offers a good illustration:

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But for my children, I would have them keep their
distance from the thickening center; corruption
Never has been compulsory, when the cities lie at
the monster's feet there are left the mountains.

And boys, be in nothing so moderate as in love of man,
a clever servant, insufferable master.
There is the trap that catches noblest spirits, that
caught—they say—God, when he walked the earth.

In such passages we seem to hear the voice of the author's Calvinist father. The doctrine of the fall of man is indeed no stranger to modern literature. We know that in some disguise or other it recurs in writers like Faulkner, Eliot, Auden, and Robert Penn Warren. Recognition of the deceitfulness of the heart and its perennial masks of egotism is a condition of salvation, personal and political. This disabused view of man is one of the major distinctions between western Christendom and Communism. But it is important that the arraignment of man be based on our own self-knowledge rather than upon embittered contempt for others. And everything depends also upon how the Fall is understood—whether as a morbid dogma or as a realistic appraisal.

Jeffers appears to see the evil in the world as conditioned by cycles. We live in the fall of an age, though men are not therefore excusable. Salvation is to be attained by "escaping the net," by transcending the common lot. Symbols of the life of God are found in aspects of nature that are wild and magnificent, alien and untouched by man. For Jeffers, as for many men without religious belief in the usual sense, a door opens now and then beyond human disgust and anguish upon an august reality, an "all-heal," glimpsed especially in the ongoings of nature. The poems celebrate such moments with impressive power. For the rest, life is lived in a stoic endurance which purges itself not only of hatred and envy but also of the love of man. From the shorter lyrics or sketches, "Their Beauty Has More Meaning"[10] may be taken as representative.

Yesterday morning enormous the moon hung low on the ocean,
Round and yellow-rose in the glow of dawn;
The night herons flapping home wore dawn on their wings.
Today
Black is the ocean, black and sulphur the sky,
And white seas leap. I honestly do not know which day is
more beautiful.

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I know that tomorrow or next year or in twenty years
I shall not see these things—and it does not matter,
it does not hurt;
They will be here. And when the whole human race
Has been like me rubbed out, they will still be here: storms,
moon and ocean,
Dawn and birds. And I say this: their beauty has more meaning
Than the whole human race and the race of birds.

JEFFERS' *DEAR JUDAS*

Our main interest here, however, has to do with Jeffers' attitude toward Christ. We have seen in the poem "Shine, Perishing Republic" that he refers to Christ as one who was caught, like many of the "noblest spirits," in the trap of the love of man. In *Dear Judas* we get the same theme. Jesus is caught by the love of man. He thinks that as the Son of God he will be able to save men by supernatural means. Lazarus, returned from the dead, bids him disregard the lot of men, which will only involve him in disaster. But Jesus perseveres. Lazarus, at the end of the poem, says to Mary (page 48):

Your son has done what men are not able to do;
He has chosen and made his own fate. The Roman
Caesar will call your son his master and
his God; the floods
That wash away Caesar and divide the booty,
shall worship your son. The unconjectured
selvages
And closed orbits of the ocean ends of the earth
shall hear of him.

It is Judas' role in the poem to betray Christ lest he occasion a Jewish uprising and a terrible Roman reprisal. Later Jesus comforts the conscience-stricken Judas by saying (page 39):

Dear Judas, it is God drives us.
It is not shameful to be duped by God. I have
known his glory in my lifetime, I
have *been* his glory, I know
Beyond illusion the enormous beauty of the
torch in which our agonies and all
are particles of fire.

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But it is Jeffers' final view, as stated in one of his shorter poems,[11] that Christ's way, his "insane solution," had

> . . . stained an age; nearly two thousand years are
> one vast poem drunk with the wine of his blood.

This reminds us of a recurrent view that the idea of the crucifixion, so deeply lodged in the Western consciousness, has given the Western people a lust for blood. We meet this idea in Yeats; in his poem "The Second Coming,"[12] for example:

> But now I know
> That twenty centuries of stony sleep
> Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle.

And Yeats refers again to this theme in the lines we have cited in our praescript from "Two Songs from a Play": [13]

> Odour of blood when Christ was slain
> Made all Platonic tolerance vain,
> And vain all Doric discipline.

Now what we have here is a very fundamental issue. There are not a few modern intellectuals who genuinely believe that Christianity, centering as it does in the Cross, has exerted its power by an appeal to, and indeed a secret stimulus to, man's hidden obsession with suffering and even blood-lust. They point to the popular piety and art forms of the centuries—crucifixes, paintings, and sculpture representing specifically the tortured Christ, as well as hymns, poems, and homilies dwelling in an ambiguous way upon the blood of Christ. It is not surprising that such observers find it difficult to draw the line between the healthy and the morbid. Psychology appears to speak all too relevantly of masochism and sadism. Social psychology speaks of repressions and ritual compensations and of ancient archetypes of the atoning victim.

On such a view the crucifixion of Christ, like a blasting vision, was so vividly implanted in the imagination of believers that it has had a morbid effect on his followers in all generations; it disturbed what Yeats calls "Platonic tolerance," or the natural sanity of the Hellenic and humanist ideal; it acted as a kind of social or cultural trauma in the life of the West. Among the sophisticated such a thesis would be related to deeper patterns of the scapegoat or sacrificial victim in ancient rites inspired by sanguinary delusions. The drama of the Cross would be seen as a main link in a long chain

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of enormities which testify to man's fatal propensity toward blood-lust or self-destruction.

It is not only in Yeats and Jeffers that one finds a connection established between the Cross and the sanguinary history of the Christian West. In Book VII of Elder Olson's cycle of poems, *The Cock of Heaven,* we read: [14]

> We think that this long night,
> This cold eclipse, is shade cast from Christ's cross.

And further:

> Cries one, 'I study the hanged staring Man
> Strung like a hanged worm in spider-string;
> Foretell, thus, foulness; foul graves for Nero and Charlemagne,
> Crowned Frederick, gowned Gregory, Dolfuss, Fey, Stalin.'

Jesus as presented in Jeffers' *Dear Judas* recognizes that the power over mankind which will be his will be achieved through suffering and men's secret affinity for cruelty (page 33):

> Oh, power
> Bought at the price of these hands and feet,—and all
> this body perishing in torture will pay—is holy.
> Their minds love terror, their souls cry to be
> sacrificed for: pain's almost the God
> Of doubtful men, who tremble expecting to
> endure it, their cruelty sublimed. And I
> think the brute cross itself
> Hewn down to a gibbet now, has been worshipped;
> it stands yet for an idol of life and
> power in the dreaming
> Soul of the world. . . .
>
> I frightfully
> Lifted up drawing all men to my feet: I go a
> stranger passage to a greater dominion
> More tyrannous, more terrible, more true, than
> Caesar or any subduer of the earth
> before him has dared to dream of.

And Christ predicts the "wasted valor of ten thousand martyrs" that will come after him (page 38):

> And men will imagine hells
> and go mad with terror, for so I have
> feathered the arrows
> Of persuasion with fire, and men will put out
> the eyes of their minds, lest faith
> Become impossible being looked at, and their
> souls perish.

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There are many who, like Jeffers, see in what they call Crosstianity a morbid ideal. One finds another example in Bernard Shaw. In the little book he wrote about the Bible called *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God,*[15] Shaw charges the disciples with superstition and a "masochist Puritanism" which prepared the way for "all the later horrors of the wars of religion, the Jew burnings of Torquemada" and other atrocities. The crucifixion of Jesus, moreover, had, as he writes (page 72) the

> hideous result that the cross and the other instruments of his torture were made the symbols of the faith legally established in his name three hundred years later. They are still accepted as such throughout Christendom. The crucifixion thus became to the churches what the chamber of horrors is to a waxwork: the irresistible attraction for children and for the crudest adult worshippers.

The theologian is confronted in all such views with a major challenge. The scandal of the Cross is sharp enough without adding to it this unnecessary element. But there are undoubtedly many discerning men and women who misunderstand the Christian faith just at this point. They find it tainted with morbidity and they are abetted in their error by widely current Christian attitudes and practices. It is, of course, true that the Christian faith relates itself to a horrendous episode, the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, and that the event carries shock and revulsion at many levels. It is true that there is a profound relation between the theme of vicarious sacrifice in the Gospel and ancient rites and myths dealing with expiation. It is true also that Christianity has its own proper forms of asceticism and world-denial.

But the theologian can also make clear that there is no proper foothold in the Christian story for man's persistent or recurrent morbidity, his impulse to give pain or to endure pain, his propensity for mortification and maceration. If such traits have attached themselves to Christianity in any of its forms, Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant, they are excrescences. Most often they represent survivals of pre-Christian patterns, outcroppings of primitive legacies, or corruptions of Christian piety occasioned by contemporary cultural factors. Dr. John Mackay has well documented this fact in connection with Latin-American Catholic practices, as well as in some forms of Spanish Catholic art and mysticism. Writing about Miguel de Unamuno, he says: [16]

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[Unamuno] makes the luminous suggestion that in the Spanish religious tradition there have been two representative views of Christ. . . . One Christ is the 'Recumbent Christ of Palencia,' who is utterly dead; the other is the 'Crucified Christ of Velásquez,' who never ceases to agonize. The Recumbent Christ of Palencia . . . is an utterly dead figure, a veritable mass of death. The gruesome image represents Christ taken down from the cross, gory and pallid. 'This Christ . . . will never rise again.' On the other hand, there is in the Spanish religious tradition what Unamuno would call the *Agonizing Christ of Velásquez*. . . . His viewpoint recalls that of Pascal for whom Christ 'will continue to be in agony until the end of the world.' . . . The Christ of Velásquez, like the cross which Unamuno drew across his heart, is the symbol of his endless struggle. . . . As a follower of this Christ, he does not ask for light or peace, but only for water, water from the abyss, to give him strength to maintain the struggle. The only peace he asks for is 'peace in Christ's struggle,' 'peace in the midst of war.'

The cases of Pascal and Unamuno (appealing to Velásquez) indicate that there is an irreproachable sense in which the suffering of Christ can be stressed and even be viewed as lasting to the end of time. As one moment or station in the contemplation of Christ this concentration on the agony may be seen as essentially Christian, provided always that it gives way promptly to the theme of resurrection and victory. A hyperbolic or baroque artistic expression of this moment of the agony may well be expected in the Spanish mystical tradition. At the same time, such forms of piety are overstrained and easily pass over into forms that are more than suspect, as is evident in other aspects of Spanish Catholicism and especially in Latin America. The Passion of Christ ended on Good Friday. No doubt the Risen and Triumphant Christ shares in the continuing struggle of the Church Militant and the martyrs. The deeper sense of this interpretation is that God himself is not impassible but is "afflicted with all our afflictions." But the secret of the suffering of the Christian according to the New Testament is that this suffering is indissolubly merged with joy: "suffering but always rejoicing," what Luther called *Kreuzseeligkeit*. To leave this out is to fall back into heathenism and into the "sorrow of the world" which "worketh death." "For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too."

One consideration is highly important here. The accounts of the passion of Christ in the Gospels themselves are devoid of any sentimental or morbid features. The evangelists do not present the

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episodes of Christ's last hours in such a way as to harrow or exacerbate the feelings of the reader. The scenes are presented with a great austerity. This is related to the fact that the Gospels are not biographies or martyrologies or even tragedies. Their purpose is not to set forth the death of a hero or a martyr. They portray a divine transaction whose import far transcends the feelings of the protagonist or the sensibilities of the observer. What is important for the evangelists is the revelation mediated—the operation of God in the event—not the poignancies of the occasion.

Modern sentiment loves to linger over the crown of thorns or the flagellation. But our best understanding of Koine Greek usage today makes it doubtful whether the plant in question, the *akantha*, had any sharp spines. The crown of acanthus was placed on the head of Jesus, just as the purple robe and mock scepter were used, for purposes of ridicule, not to inflict pain. This was the garb of royalty. As for the flagellation, it is mentioned only in a passing phrase. The interest of the evangelist here is in the fulfillment of prophecy and in the due preliminaries of Roman crucifixion.

Thus the primary Christian sources show the way. The Cross of Christ should be a fountain of health and not of morbidity. The representation of the passion of Christ in art should not encourage the gratification with pain which is so widely evident in certain forms of Latin American art forms. The blood of Christ should not be dwelt on in cult or hymn or sermon in such a way as to feed men's regressive impulses toward excitement and self-mortification, as in some forms of Protestant orgiastic practice.

There is indeed a deep mystery in the Cross, and the agony of Christ is related to the law of suffering which runs through the whole story of life, human and subhuman. Here is one aspect of the fascination that the Cross exerts upon all beholders. This is one meaning of the words: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." A God without wounds can never hold men long. Robinson Jeffers recognizes this scarlet thread of blood and agony that runs through all of life. For him it is the lot even of those who escape the net of life and attain to the "tower beyond tragedy."

Properly understood, the death of Christ, and blood of Christ, cannot evoke what Yeats calls turbulence and intolerance in the sequel. The only shadow that the Cross casts over history is one of shelter and asylum. If the legacy of the crucifixion has been compounded with sanguinary delusions in the annals of mankind,

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the fault is not with the Gospel. And in rejecting such perverted versions of Christianity, modern skepticism may play a useful part.

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12. From *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats,* p. 215. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.
13. *Ibid.,* p. 246. Note the context of the lines: a new cycle of ages, a new *magnus annus,* is introduced by the death of Christ. This cycle is marked by "Galilean turbulence." The star of the Magi and the child of the "fierce virgin" initiate a sanguinary age of disorder:

    The Babylonian starlight brought
    A fabulous, formless darkness in.

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On the First Three Chapters of Genesis

KENNETH BURKE

IF WE *set up a cycle of terms that tautologically imply one another, there is no one proper "progression" among them. They forever turn back upon themselves in endless* circularity. *In contrast, the terms of a narrative follow one another in one fixed, irreversible,* rectilinear *sequence. This essay considers the relations between such "circular" and "rectilinear" kinds of terminology. To that end, the Creation Myth at the opening of Genesis is taken as the paradigm of a narrative, or "rectilinear" terminology. And it is compared with a "circular" list of terms implicit in the idea of "Order."*

This is the third of "Three Talks on 'Logology'" which the author is now developing into a book on the subject. The first, "On Words and The Word," deals with six major analogies between words conceived secularly and The Word conceived theologically. The second, on "Verbal Action in St. Augustine's Confessions," *analyzes Augustine's development from a teacher of pagan rhetoric (What he calls a "word merchant,"* venditor verborum) *to a preacher of The Word. And quite as the* Confessions *ends on the study of Genesis, so our third essay makes this same turn except that the distinction between "time" and "eternity" is here treated in its analogous form, as the distinction between the unfolding of a sentence through the materials of its parts, and the unitary, nonmaterial essence or meaning of the sentence (an analogy which Augustine himself draws).*

We lay great stress upon the sacrificial principle in the idea of Order because the contemporary world must doubly fear the cyclical compulsions of Empire, as two mighty world orders, each homicidally armed to the point of suicide, confront each other. As with dominion always, each is much beset with anxiety. And in keeping with the "curative" role of victimage, each is apparently in acute need of blaming all its many troubles on the other, wanting to feel certain that, if but the other were eliminated, all governmental discord (all the Disorder that goes with Order) would be ended.

The author would propose to replace the present political stress upon men in rival international situations by a "logological" reaffirmation of the foibles and quandaries that all men (in their role as "symbol-using animals") have in common.

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INTRODUCTION: ON COVENANT AND ORDER

WE WANT so to relate the ideas of Creation, Covenant, and Fall that they can be seen to implicate one another inextricably, along with ideas of Sacrifice and Redemption.

Creation implies authority in the sense of originator, the designer or author of the things created.

Covenant implies authority in the sense of power, sovereignty—the highest or more radical sovereignty in case the Covenant is made by God.

The possibility of a "Fall" is implied in the idea of a Covenant insofar as the idea of a Covenant implies the possibility of its being violated. One does not make a covenant with stones or trees or fire—for such things cannot break agreements or defy commands, since they cannot even understand agreements or commands.

Also, the possibility of a "Fall" is implied in the idea of the Creation, insofar as the Creation was a kind of "divisiveness," since it set up different categories of things which could be variously at odds with one another and which accordingly lack the proto-Edenic simplicity of absolute unity. Thus Coleridge observes (*Table Talk*, May 1, 1830):

> A Fall of some sort or other—the creation, as it were, of the non-absolute—is the fundamental postulate of the moral history of man. Without this hypothesis, man is unintelligible; with it, every phenomenon is explicable. The mystery itself is too profound for human insight.

Though this may be a mystery theologically, its logological analogue is not mysterious. Logologically, there is a "fall" from a prior state of unity whenever some one term is broken into two or more terms, so that we have the "divisiveness" of "classification" where we formerly had had a "vision of perfect oneness." If the title of a book could be said to sum up the nature of that book, then the breakdown of the book into parts, chapters, paragraphs, sentences, words would be technically a "fall" from the Edenic unity of the title, or epitomizing "god-term." The parts of the book reduce its "idea" to "matter." Or, as Coleridge said (*Table Talk*, October 15, 1833): "The Trinity is the Idea: the Incarnation, which implies the Fall, is the Fact: the redemption is the mesothesis of the two—that is—the Religion."

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Presumably he is thinking of "religion" here in the sense of *religare* (to bind, connect, fasten)—and the logological analogue to his theory in this instance would concern our way of tying the particulars of a work together in accordance with the over-all spirit signalized by its unitary and unifying title.

Narratively, there was the Creation; then came the "Edenic" Covenant (which included the injunction against eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil); then the Fall; and then the "Adamic" Covenant (III, 14-19), which included punishments for Adam's first disobedience. But though this order is irreversible from the standpoint of narrative, there is a sense in which we can reverse the order. For instance, we could "begin" with the idea of a punishment; next we could note that the idea of punishment implies the idea of some infraction which makes the punishment relevant; and such infraction implies the need for a set of conditions that make the infraction possible; and insofar as we looked for a "first" set of such conditions, the idea of them would imply the idea of the kind of Creation that allowed for disobedience.

Again, in the idea of punishment we might discern another kind of implication. Punishment being a kind of "payment" for wrong, we can see flickering about the edges of the idea of punishment the idea of redemption. To "pay" for one's wrongdoing by suffering punishment is to "redeem" oneself, to cancel one's debt, to ransom, or "buy back."

Next, since the idea of an agent is implicit in the idea of an act, we can say that in the idea of redemption there is implicit the idea of a personal redeemer. Or, if you think of redemption as a condition or situation (a "scene"), then you may extract the same implication by thinking of a redeemer as an instrument, or agency, for bringing about the condition. And this step, you will note, automatically includes the idea of a substitution: the possibility that one character may be redeemed through the act or agency of another.

The idea of such substitution, or vicarage, neatly parallels at one end of the series an idea at the other: the notion that, as one character can redeem another by suffering in his stead, so one character can impute guilt to another by sinning in his stead. This would be true of the Pauline logic whereby Adam's disobedience represents a guiltiness in Everyman with regard to Covenants ("In Adam's fall / We sinned all") and there is introduced a principle of representation whereby a "second Adam" can serve as sacrificial

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substitute for mankind when the categorical guiltiness is being "paid for."

More specifically, the conditions for such a doctrine of "original sin" are set up when our "first" parent who commits the crucial sin has a name at once individual and generic, a name that can be translated either as "Adam" or as "man." Thus, in his sin as "Adam," he can personate mankind in general. We shall later consider other ways in which the purely narrative style operates here, but this shift between individual and generic should be enough for the moment.

The other six great Covenants mentioned in the Bible are the Noachian, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New (as in Hebrews VIII, 8). But the two mentioned in the first three chapters (the Edenic and the Adamic) are sufficient for our purposes, except that the step from punishment to redemption is tenuous. There are the ceremony of redemption by vicarious atonement in connection with the feast of the Passover (Exodus XII) and the sacrificial slaying of the goat set apart for Azazel (Leviticus XVI). Earlier, the principle of a personal redeemer was clearly present in Abraham's offering of Isaac (Genesis XXII). And as early as Genesis VIII, 20-21 (in connection with the third Covenant), Noah makes burnt offerings "of every clean fowl" (whereat the Lord "smelled a sweet savour" and "said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake").

Though the idea of a redemptive sacrifice is clear enough as regards the Biblical idea of a Covenant in general, it is but inchoately there as regards the two Covenants in the first three chapters of Genesis. We have tried to argue for its implicit presence by showing that the idea of redemption is a further stage in the idea of punishment, and the idea of a redeemer (hence, of vicarious atonement) is implicit in the idea of redemption. And as regards our over-all concern (with the notion that the idea of a redeemer is implicit in the idea of a Covenant in general), the later developments of the Bible itself with relation to God's "peculiar people" make this relation clear enough.

But I might add, incidentally, that one Bible I happen to be consulting, *The Scofield Reference Bible,* professes to find "the first promise of a Redeemer" in Genesis III, 15, where the Lord God, in cursing the serpent for having tempted Eve, decrees: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and

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her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The editor asserts that here begins "the highway of the Seed," which he traces through Abel, Seth, Noah (Genesis VI, 8-10), Shem (Genesis IX, 26-27), Abraham (Genesis XII, 1-4), Isaac (Genesis XVII, 19-21), Jacob (Genesis XXVIII, 10-14), Judah (Genesis XLIX, 10), David (2 Samuel VII, 5-17), Immanuel-Christ (Isaiah VII, 9-14; Matthew I, 1, 20-23; 1 John III, 8; John XII, 31). Thus, however strained the point may seem, it should apply insofar as there is a continuity between the idea of temptation and the idea of a redeemer when this continuity is expressed in terms of a continuity of "the Seed," from the locus of "original sin" to the locus of its cancellation by redemptive sacrifice. Or, otherwise put: the hereditary line here listed would represent at every stage a contact with the principle of a Covenant, and the principle of a Covenant contains within itself the principles of both temptation (on the part of one who might break the Covenant) and "repayment" (or "redemption") insofar as the aggrieved party is willing to impose and accept a fine or forfeit. (The thought, incidentally, suggests how the ideas of "justice" and "mercy" will also be found implicit in the idea of a Covenant—"justice" being but the idea of a proper repayment and "mercy" the "good" word for the idea of a willingness to accept a repayment that in some notable respect is disproportionate to the gravity of the offense.)

In Rashi's *Commentary on the Pentateuch,* with regard to the opening formula ("In the beginning") another commenator is quoted to this effect: The main object of the Law (or Torah) being to teach commandments *(mitzvoth),* if this were the only consideration involved the Bible could have begun with the second verse of Exodus XII ("This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you"). Notably for our purposes, the passage he mentions deals with the rite of the paschal lamb sacrificed at Passover, and thus contains the thought that in a notable respect this book of beginnings might have begun with the principle of sacrifice.

For our purposes, this is a most important consideration. For we are to deal above all with "firsts" (or "principles"). More specifically, we are to be concerned with the "firsts" or "principles" of Covenants. And we are to be on the lookout for the important role played by the sacrificial principle in the cycle of terms that cluster about the idea of a Covenant. So it is notable that the most famous

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Jewish commentary on Genesis begins by considering a possible alternative first, one having to do with the instituting of a sacrifice as regards the Lord's governmental contract with his chosen people.

However, we are told in the Rashi commentary that the Bible begins as it does rather than with the establishing of a paschal ceremony because the first words of Genesis, by showing all the world to be the property of God, make clear Israel's rights to seize the lands of the Canaanites, since God could dispose of his property as he chose, and he chose to give the lands of Canaan to the Israelites. (Incidentally, there is a sense in which the beginning of Genesis as we now have it would be the proper "pre-first," even for the commentator's claim: it sets up the conditions of division and dominion necessary for the idea of a Covenant by which Canaan became a promised land.)

Rashi also cites a rabbinical interpretation to the effect that God created the world for the sake of the Law (the Torah). And in connection with this position (as against the notion that the Bible is attempting to say what came first in time), he notes that there were waters before the creating of heaven and earth. (Also, the very word for "heavens" is a combination of words for "fire" and "water.")

Rashi is interested in bringing out the notion that the world was created by God not solely to the ends of justice, but first of all to the ends of mercy combined with justice. As regards our cycle of the terms implicit in the idea of a Covenant, we need but note that the ideas of both justice and mercy are present in the idea of repayment for the breaking of a contract (justice when the penalty is proportionate to the offense, mercy when the penalty is favorably disproportionate, while injustice would involve a penalty unfavorably disproportionate).

As regards Rashi's questioning of the notion that the Creation story in Genesis is dealing strictly with firsts in time, we should find his reservations logologically much to our purposes. Logologically, Genesis would be interpreted as dealing with principles (with logical "firsts," rather than sheerly temporal ones). From the very start it is dealing with the principles of governance (firsts expressed in quasi-temporal terms, since they are the kind most natural to the narrative style). That is, the account of the Creation should be interpreted as saying in effect: This is, in principle, a statement of what the natural order must be like if it is to fit perfectly the con-

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ditions of human socio-political order (conditions that come to a focus in the idea of a basic Covenant backed by a perfect authority).

To get the point, turn now to Pope's line, "Order is Heaven's first law." In Pope's formula, the idea of a "first" is ambiguous. The reader is not quite sure (nor need he be) whether it means first in time, or first in importance, or first in the sense of a logical grounding for all other laws, a kind of "causal ancestor" from which all other "laws" could be deduced or derived as lineal descendants.

Once we have brought out the strategic importance of the part played by the Biblical stress upon the idea of Covenant, there are advantages to be gained by locating our cycle of dramatistic terms about the term "Order" rather than about the term "Covenant."

The most general starting point for the dramatistic cycle of terms would be in the term "act." Under this head would belong God's creative acts in the first chapter of Genesis, God's enactment of the first Covenant (largely permissive, but with one crucial negative command), Adam's act of disobedience, and God's enactment of a second Covenant imposing penalties upon all mankind.

Also, of course, there would be terms for the many kinds of "rationally" purposive motion, along with their corresponding "passions," which characterize human life in all its aspects. These would be without such stress upon "sin" or "guilt" as necessarily arises when we deal with the story of a first temptation. But for this very reason, such a general approach to a dramatistic cycle of terms would not serve our present purpose. Frankly, it would not be morbid enough. We need an approach that, like the Bible itself, leads us from a first Adam, in whom all vicariously "sinned," to a "second Adam" by whom all might vicariously make atonement. For we are trying to analyze the respects in which the ideas of both guilt and redemption by vicarious sacrifice are intrinsic to the idea of a Covenant (which in turn is intrinsic to the idea of governance).

Yet the term "Covenant" is not wholly convenient for our purposes. Having no opposite in standard usage, it seems as purely "positive" as words like "stone," "tree," or "table," which are not matched by companion words like "counter-stone," "anti-tree," or "un-table" (except sometimes in the dialectic of E. E. Cummings). And perhaps the notion of "positive law" secretly contributes to one's feeling that "Covenants" can be treated as "positive," despite the all-importance of the negative in defining the conditions of

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Adam's fall. The term "Order," on the other hand, clearly reveals its dialectical or "polar" nature on its face. "Order" implies "disorder" and vice versa. And that is the kind of term we need.

However, when putting it in place of the word "Covenant," we should try never to forget Hobbes's emphasis upon the severities of sovereignty as integral to the kind of Order we shall be studying. The idea of "Order" is ambiguous not only in the sense that it contains an idea of "Disorder." The term "Order" is ambiguous also because it can be applied to two quite different areas, either to such natural regularities as tides and seasons or to socio-political structures in which people can give or receive orders, in which orders can be obeyed or disobeyed, in which offices are said to pyramid in an orderly arrangement of powers and responsibilities. The double notion of God's authority (in his roles as both originator and sovereign) obviously combines both of these meanings. It joins the idea of the creative verbal fiats by which God brought the natural order into existence and the idea of a divine ruler laying down the law by words, in keeping with Hobbes's stout statement: "He only is properly said to reign, that governs his subjects by his word, and by promise of rewards to those that obey it, and by threatening them with punishment that obey it not."

Our task, then, is to examine the term "Order" by asking what cluster of ideas is "tautologically" present in the idea of Order. Such a cycle of terms follows no one sequence. That is, we may say either that the idea of Disorder is implicit in the idea of Order or that the idea of Order is implicit in the idea of Disorder. Or we might say that the idea of Order implies the ideas of Obedience and Disobedience, or that either of them implies the other, or that either or both imply the idea of an Order, and so on.

However, when such terministic interrelationships are embodied in the narrative style (involving acts, images, and personalities) an irreversibility of the sequence can become of major importance. For instance, the implications of a story that proceeds from order to disorder (or from obedience to disobedience) differ greatly from those of a story that proceeds in the other direction. We may say that "success" and "failure" imply each other, without equating the step from success to failure with the step from failure to success. There are also paradoxical complications whereby, for instance, a step from success to failure in some respects is at the same time a step from failure to success in other respects. And there is the

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possibility of a story so self-consistent in structure that an analyst could, ideally, begin at the end and deductively "prophesy" what earlier developments must have taken place for things to culminate as they did. But such considerations merely subtilize the narrative or temporal principle of irreversibility; they do not eliminate it.

The plan, then, is first to evolve a cluster of interrelated key terms implicit in the idea of "Order." Then we shall ask how the narrative, or "rectilinear," style of Genesis compares with the "cycle of terms" we have found to revolve "endlessly" about the idea of "Order." And, finally, we shall draw some conclusions from the comparison of the two styles (the "timeless" terministic cluster and the kind of "temporal" sequence embodied in the Biblical myth). The distinction is one touched upon by Coleridge ("Idea of the Prometheus of Aeschylus," in Volume IV of the Shedd edition of his *Complete Works),* where he speaks of the Biblical method as "sacred narrative" and "Hebrew archæology," in contrast with Greek "philosopheme."

TAUTOLOGICAL CYCLE OF TERMS FOR "ORDER"*

First, consider the strategic ambiguity whereby the term "Order" may apply both to the realm of nature in general and to the special realm of human socio-political organizations (an ambiguity whereby, so far as sheerly empirical things are concerned, a natural order could be thought to go on existing even if all human beings, with their various socio-political orders, were obliterated). This is a kind of logical pun whereby our ideas of the natural order can become secretly infused by our ideas of the socio-political order.

One might ask: Is not the opposite possibility just as likely? Might not the terms for the socio-political order become infused by the genius of the terms for the natural order? They do, every time we metaphorically extend the literal meaning of a natural image to the realm of the socio-political. It is the point that Bentham made much of in his Theory of Fictions, his systematic procedure ("archetypation") for locating the natural images that may lurk undetected in our ideas and so may mislead us into attempting to deal too strictly

* When reading this chapter and later references to the same subject, the reader might find it helpful to consult the chart on page 46 outlining the terministic conditions for "Original Sin" and "Redemption" (intrinsic to the idea of "Order").

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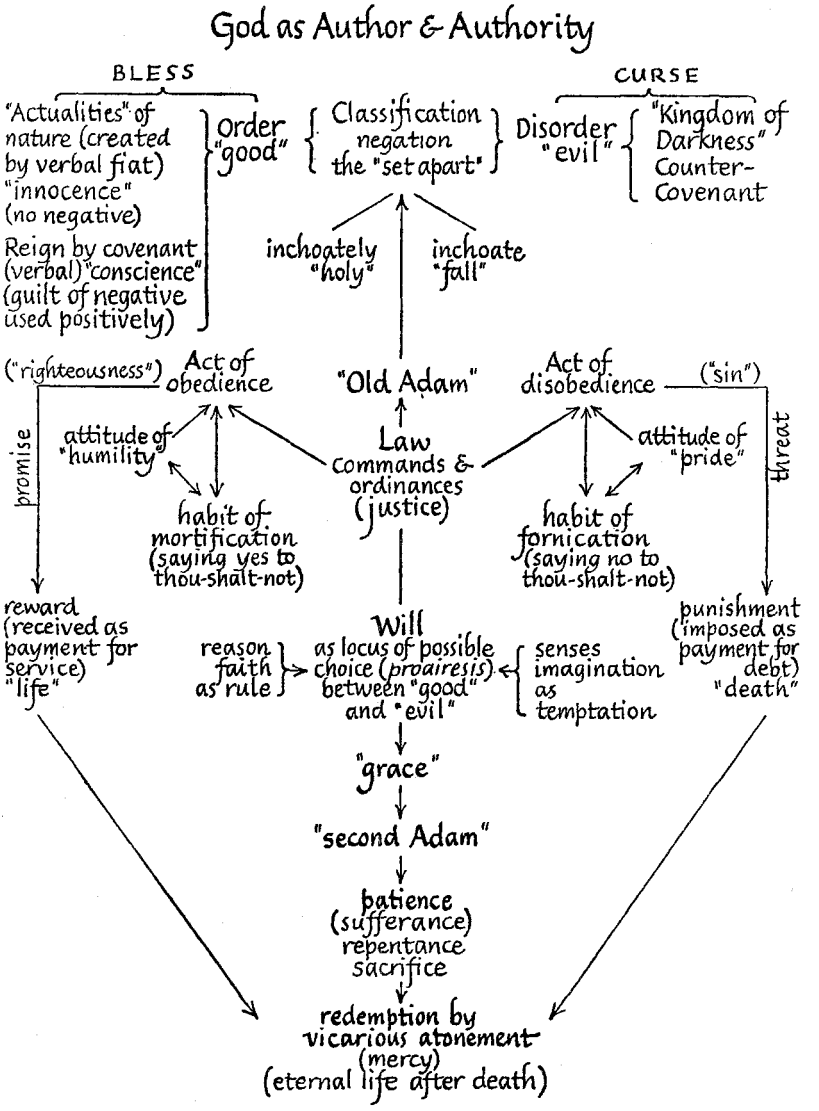
in terms of the irrelevant image. For instance, if Churchillian rhetoric gets us to thinking of international relations in such terms as "iron curtains" and "power vacuums," then we must guard lest we respond to the terms too literally—otherwise we shall not conceive of

CYCLE OF TERMS IMPLICIT IN THE IDEA OF "ORDER"



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the political situation accurately enough. The Arab nations are no "vacuum." Theologians have made similar observations about the use of natural images to express the idea of godhead.

But it is much more important for our present purposes to spot the movement in the other direction. We need to stress how a vision of the natural order can become infused with the genius of the verbal and socio-political orders.

Thus, from the purely logological point of view we note how, inasmuch as the account of the Creation in Genesis involves on each "day" a kind of enactment done through the medium of God's "Word," the sheerly "natural" order contains a verbal element or principle that from the purely empirical point of view could belong only in the socio-political order. Empirically, the natural order of astrophysical motion depends upon no verbal principle for its existence. But theologically it does depend upon a verbal principle. And even though one might say that God's creative fiats and his words to Adam and Eve are to be conceived as but analogous to ordinary human verbal communication, our point remains the same. For from the empirical point of view, there would not even be an analogy between natural origins and responses to the power of words. The world of natural, nonverbal motions must be empirically the kind of world that could continue with its motions even if it contained no species, such as man, capable of verbal action; and it must be described without any reference to a Creation by verbal fiat, whether or not there had been such.

By a dramatistic ambiguity, standard usage bridges this distinction between the realms of verbal action and nonverbal motion when it speaks of sheerly natural objects or processes as "actualities." Here even in a purely secular usage we can discern a trace of the theological view that sees nature as the sign of God's action—and thus by another route we see the theological way of merging the principle of the natural order with the principle of verbal contract or covenant intrinsic to legal enactment in the socio-political order.

But to proceed with the "tautologies":

If, by "Order," we have in mind the idea of a command, then obviously the corresponding word for the proper response would be "Obey." Or there would be the alternative, "Disobey." Thus we have the proportion: Order is to Disorder as Obedience is to Disobedience. However, there is a logological sense in which the things of nature could be called "innocent." They cannot disobey

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commands, since they cannot understand commands. They do not have a "sense of right and wrong" or, more generically, a "sense of yes and no." They simply do as they do—and that's that. Such would be the *non posse peccare* of natural things or even of humans insofar as their "natural" state was not bound by moralistic negatives. All was permissive in Eden but the eating of the one forbidden fruit, the single negative that set the conditions for the Fall (since, St. Paul pointed out, only the law can make sin, as Bentham was later to point out that only the law can make crime). The Biblical myth pictures natural things as coming into being through the agency of God's Word; but they can merely do as they are told, whereas with God's permission, though not without his resentment, the seed of Adam can do even what it has been explicitly told not to do. The word-using animal not only understands a thou-shalt-not; it can carry the principle of the negative a step further, and answer the thou-shalt-not with a disobedient No. Logologically, the distinction between natural innocence and fallen man hinges about this problem of language and the negative. Eliminate language from nature and there can be no moral disobedience. In this sense, moral disobedience is "doctrinal." Like faith, it is grounded in language.

Looking into the act of Disobedience, we come upon the need for some such term as "Pride" to name the corresponding attitude that precedes the act. And some such term as "Humility" names the idea of the attitude that leads into the act of Obedience.

But implicit in the distinction between Obedience and Disobedience there is the idea of some dividing line, some "watershed" that is itself midway between the two slopes. Often a word used for naming this ambiguous moment is "Will" or, more fully, "Free Will," which is thought of as a faculty that makes possible the choice between the yea-saying of Humble Obedience or the nay-saying of Prideful Disobedience (the choice between *serviam* and *non serviam*).

Ontologically, and theologically, we say that this locus of freedom makes possible the kind of personal choice we have in mind when we speak of "Action." But note that, logologically, the statement should be made the other way round. That is, whereas ontologically or theologically we say that by being endowed with free will man is able to act morally, the corresponding logological statement would be: Implicit in the idea of an act is the idea of free will. (Another

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version of the formula would be: Implicit in the idea of an act is the idea of freedom.)

The ontological and theological statements may or may not be true. The logological statement would be "true logologically" even if it were not true ontologically. That is, even if we hypothetically supposed, with strict behaviorists and the like, that there is no such thing as "free will," that all "action" is reducible to terms of mechanical "motion," it would still remain true that implicit in the idea of action there is the idea of freedom. If one cannot make a choice, one is not acting, one is but being moved, like a billiard ball tapped with a cue and behaving mechanically in conformity with the resistances it encounters. But even if men are doing nothing more than that, the word "act" implies that they are doing more—and we are now concerned solely with the implications of terms.

As regards the dramatistic tautology in general, an act is done by an agent in a scene. But such an act is usually preceded by a corresponding attitude, or "incipient act" (as when an act of friendliness follows a friendly attitude on the part of the agent). The scene is the motivational locus of the act insofar as the act represents a scene-act ratio (as, for instance, when an "emergency situation" is said to justify an "emergency measure"). But as the act derives from an attitude of the agent, the agent-act ratio can be narrowed to an attitude-act ratio, as when a friendly agent does a friendly act. The term "Will" is apparently designed to assign a "place" to the choice between different possibilities of attitude-act development. Here a verb is thought of as a noun; the idea of "the will" as willing is conceived after the analogy of rain raining, though we do not speak of fear as fearing. But the idea of such a locus for "the Will" brings up a further problem: What in turn influences "the Will"?

On the Disorder side, this role is assigned to the Imagination, insofar as the imagination's close connection with sensory images is thought both to make it highly responsive to the sensory appetites and to make sensory appetites more enticing. In brief, the combination of Imagination and the Senses, by affecting the Will from the side of Disorder, is said to predispose toward Temptation, except as Imagination in turn is corrected from the side of Order by the controls of Reason and Faith (which can also be thought of as having a controlling effect upon each other). Another refinement here is the notion that, once Imagination is on the side of Reason, it can

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contribute to Order, rather than to Disorder, by making reasonable things seem sensible and thus inducing the Wills of persons weak in Reason to none the less freely choose, as it were, reasonably and thus to act on the side of Order, eschewing Temptation.

The idea of Reason in such a system is obviously permeated with ideas of Dominion, owing to its identification with ideas of control and as indicated in the formula, "the Rule of Reason." So it brings us clearly back to the principle of sovereignty underlying the general idea of Order by Covenant. The relation between Reason and Faith becomes ambiguous because of the possible shift between the natural order and the socio-political order as grounds of Reason. For if the socio-political Order is conceived in "ultimate" terms (as it is in the idea of a Covenant derived from God), then Faith must be a kind of control higher than Reason, insofar as Reason is identified with "Natural Law" and with purely worldly rules of governance. (Incidentally, we might note the strongly verbal element in both, as indicated by the close relation between Rational and Logical and by St. Paul's statement that the doctrines of the Faith are learned "by hearing." However, there is said to be a further stage of supernatural awareness, called by St. Anselm *contemplatio* and by Spinoza *scientia intuitiva,* which would by definition transcend the verbal.)

There is also an act-agent ratio, as with the Aristotelian notion of *hexis, habitus,* the notion that a person may develop a virtuous Disposition by the practices of virtue or a vicious Disposition by repeated indulgence in vice. And this brings us to the subtlest term of all as regards the set of major dramatistic terms clustering about the idea of Order; namely, Mortification.

Of all theology-tinged terms that need logological reclamation and refurbishment, this is perhaps the most crucial. Here the motives of sacrifice and dominion come to a head in everyday living. The possibility is that most ailments now said to be of "psychogenic" origin are but secularized variants of what might be called "mortification in spite of itself." That is, if we are right in assuming that governance makes "naturally" for victimage, either of others (homicidally) or of ourselves (suicidally), then we may expect to encounter many situations in which a man, by attitudes of self-repression, often causes or aggravates his own bodily and mental ills.

The derived meaning (humiliation, vexation, chagrin) would figure here. But mainly we have in mind the Grand Meaning, "subjection of the passions and appetites, by penance, abstinence,

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or painful severities inflicted on the body," mortification as a kind of governance, an extreme form of "self-control," the deliberate, disciplinary "slaying" of any motive that, for "doctrinal" reasons, one thinks of as unruly. In an emphatic way, mortification is the exercising of oneself in "virtue"; it is a systematic way of saying no to Disorder, or obediently saying yes to Order. Its opposite is license, *luxuria*, "fornication," saying yes to Disorder, no to Order.

The principle of Mortification is particularly crucial to conditions of empire, which act simultaneously to awaken all sorts of odd and exacting appetites, while at the same time imposing equally odd and exacting obstacles to their fulfillment. For "mortification" does not occur when one is merely "frustrated" by some external interference. It must come from within. The mortified must, with one aspect of himself, be saying no to another aspect of himself—hence the urgent incentive to be "purified" by "projecting" his conflict upon a scapegoat, by seeking a sacrificial vessel upon which he can vent, as from without, a turmoil that is actually within. "Psychogenic illness" would occur in cases in which one was scrupulous enough to deny himself such easy outgoing relief and, instead, in all sorts of roundabout ways, scrupulously circled back upon himself, unintentionally making his own constitution the victim of his hierarchally goaded entanglements.

To complete the pattern: On the side of Order, where the natural actualities created by verbal fiat are completed in sovereignty and subjection by Covenant, with Obedience goes promise of reward (as payment for service), while on the other side goes Disobedience, with threat of punishment as enforced payment for disservice.

Then comes the Grand Rounding Out, where the principle of reward as payment (from the Order side) merges with the principle of punishment as payment (from the Disorder side), to promise of redemption by vicarious atonement. Sovereignty and subjection (the two poles of governance) are brought together in the same figure (Christ as King and Christ as Servant, respectively)—and the contradiction between these principles is logically resolved by a narrative device, the notion of two advents whereby Christ could appear once as servant and the second time as king. Here is the idea of a "perfect" victim to cancel (or "cover") what was in effect the "perfect" sin (its technical perfection residing in the fact that it was the first transgression of the first man against the first and foremost authority).

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However, the symmetry of the design does not resolve the problem of the "watershed moment," the puzzle of the relation between "determinism" and "free will." The search for a cause is itself the search for a scapegoat, as Adam blames Eve, Eve blames the serpent, the serpent could have blamed Lucifer, and Lucifer could have blamed the temptations implicit in the idea of Order (the inchoate "fall" that, as we saw in the quotation from Coleridge, is intrinsic to the "creation of the non-absolute"). Adam himself has a hint of the Luciferian rejoinder when he says to the Lord God that he received the fruit from "the woman whom thou gavest to be with me." Also, from the purely imagistic point of view, there is a sense in which the Lord God has caused Adam to be tempted by an aspect of himself, in accordance with the original obstetrical paradox whereby woman was born of man.

Here would be a purely "grammatical" way of stating the case: If order, implying the possibility of disorder, implies a possible act of disobedience, then there must be an agent so endowed, or so minded, that such an act is possible to him—and the motives for such an act must eventually somehow be referred to the scene out of which he arose and which thus somehow contains the principles that in their way make a "bad" act possible.

Arrived at this point, we might shift the problem of the "watershed moment" to another plane, by recalling that the same conditions of divisiveness also make for the inchoately "holy," inasmuch as the Hebrew word for "holy," *qodesh,* means literally the "separate," the "set apart," as does the word *qadesh,* which means "Sodomite." This verbal tangle has often been commented on, and it applies also to the New Testament word *hagios,* which means both "holy" and "accursed," like its Latin counterpart, *sacer.* Here, we might say, is a purely terministic equivalent of the problem of choice, or motivational slope. The question of de-terminism narrows down to a kind of term that within itself contains two slopes (two different judgments or "crises").

As regards the matter of terms, we could move into the area of personality proper by equating human personality with the ability to use symbol-systems (centering in the feeling for the negative, since "reason," in its role as the "sense of right and wrong," is but a special case of the "sense of yes and no"). Thus, more broadly, we could say that the conception of the creative verbal fiat in Genesis is essentially the *personal principle.* But insofar as personal character

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is defined by choice (*cf.* Aristotle on *proairesis, Poetics*, VI, 24), the question becomes one of deciding how far back the grounds of choice must be traced. Since Genesis would depict us as arising from a scene that is the act of a super-person and redemption is thought to be got by voluntary enlistment on the side of Order, conceived sacrificially, the ultimate formula becomes that of Jeremiah XXXI, 18: "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned" *(converte me, et convertar)*. Here the indeterminate watershed of "free" choice is reducible to a question of this sort: Though all men are given enough "grace" to be saved, how can anyone be saved but by being given enough grace to be sure of using it? Yet how could he have as much saving grace as that, without in effect being compelled to be saved (in which case he would not, in the last analysis, have "free will")?

Fortunately, it is not our duty, as logologers, to attempt solving this ultimate theological riddle, entangled in ideas of providence, predestination, and the possibilities of an elect, chosen from among the depraved, all of whom deserve eternal damnation, but some of whom are saved by God in his mysterious mercy and may attest to their future glory by becoming a kind of materially prosperous elite here and now.

Fortunately, as logologers, we need but consider the ways in which such ideas are interwoven with the conditions of dominion, as they prevail among human symbol-using animals. As seen in this light, the thought of all such issues leads us to revision of our initial dialectical pattern. That is, the Order-Disorder pair is not enough. And what we need now is another kind of antithesis, setting Order against Counter-Order.

Methodologically, we might say that we have now come upon the penalties resulting from our earlier decision to approach this problem in terms of "Order" rather than in terms of "Covenant." For the idea of a "Counter-Covenant" would have been somewhat different from the idea of such a mere disintegration as is usually suggested by the term "Disorder."

In sum, there is a notable qualitative difference between the idea of a mere "fall" from a position in which one still believes, but to which one is at times unequal, and the idea of a deliberate turn to an alternative allegiance. It would be a difference between being "weak in virtue" and being "strong in sin."

But perhaps we should try to sum up the line of reasoning we have been pursuing in these last paragraphs. We have been con-

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sidering the problem of a possible ultimate ground for "Temptation." Logologically, "Temptation" is but a tautological aspect of the idea of "Order." It is grounded in the idea of a verbal command, which by its very nature contains possibilities of both obedience and disobedience. We do not "command" the nonverbalizing things of nature. To the best of our ability, we simply set up conditions which we think likely to bring about the kind of situation we desire. We reserve our commands (or requests!) for language-using entities that can, to varying degrees, resist. And the command is backed, explicity or implicitly, by promises or threats.

However, ontologically, or theologically, such a purely "tautological" point of view would not be enough. And we confront such problems as St. Augustine was concerned with in his battles with the Manichaeans. We may, like the Manichaeans, conceive of an ultimate Tempter, existing in his own right and with powers rivaling those of God. Or we may derive everything from a God who is by definition merciful, and good, the author of a wholly good Creation, yet who not only lets man sin but permits the existence and incessant schemings of a supernatural tempter endowed with diabolical ingenuity and persuasiveness. Hence arises the "problem of evil" (as with Augustine's urgent question, "*Unde malum?*"). We have considered in the previous talk how Augustine proposed to solve the problem theologically by his notion of evil as a "deficient cause," a kind of "eclipse."

But logologically, the question takes on a different form. Logologically, moral "evil" is a species of negative, a purely linguistic (or "rational") principle. And insofar as natural calamities are viewed in terms of moral retribution, we should say that the positive events of nature are being seen through the eyes of moral negativity (another instance of ways whereby the genius of the verbal and socio-political orders can come to permeate our ideas of the natural order). All told, "evil" is implicit in the idea of "Order" because "Order" is a polar, or dialectical term, implying an idea of "Disorder."

But there can be two kinds of "Disorder": (1) a tendency toward failure to obey completely always; (2) disobedience due to an out-and-out enrollment in the ranks of a rival force. We might call this a distinction between mere Disorder and deliberate allegiance to a Counter-Order. (There is an analogous situation in contemporary politics, since a person's disagreements with those in authority may be interpreted either as temperamental deviation

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from the prevailing orthodoxy or as sinister, secret adherence to an organized enemy alien power.)

Theologically, perhaps the analogous distinction would be between the kind of "Temptation" that is intrinsic to the possibility of choice and the kind that attains its ideal perfection in the notion of a Faustian pact with the Devil—the difference between ordinary "backsliding" and "heresy" or "black magic." Problems of "predestination" lie in the offing, inasmuch as different people are differently tempted or differently enlightened and such differences are not of their own choosing but arise in connection with the accidents of each man's unique, particular destiny. (In the *Confessions*, for instance, we see St. Augustine interpreting as God's will many decisions which he had made for quite different personal reasons. And no man could sell his soul to the Devil if God, who was necessarily present at the signing of the contract, but chose that moment to flood the victim's imagination with the full realization of his danger.)

At this point, we should look at Hobbes's *Leviathan*, since it illustrates so well the idea of Disorder in this more aggressive sense of a Covenant matched by a "Counter-Covenant." And in the course of doing so, it well illustrates the role of the sacrificial principle which we believe to be "logologically inseparable" from the idea of dominion.

COVENANT AND "COUNTER-COVENANT" IN HOBBES'S *LEVIATHAN*

Part I of the *Leviathan* is "Of Man." But this subtitle can easily mislead us. For Part I is not just "Of Man." It is *of man in the commonwealth*. That is, the principle of Part II, which explicitly concerns commonwealth, is already implicit as a germ in Part I. Thus there is no break in continuity as we turn from Part I to Part II. The quickest way to make it obvious that the motives of commonwealth are already operating in the first section, and coloring the philosopher's view of man qua man, is to cite such chapter headings as: "Of Power, Worth, Dignity, Honour, and Worthiness" and "Of Persons, Authors, and Things Personated." Perhaps one cannot explicitly write just "of man" without implicitly writing of man in the commonwealth (or, at least, of man in the tribe), since man is, as Aristotle puts it in good Athenian fashion, a "political animal."

Similarly, in Genesis, though the first three Covenants have to do with man and woman, brothers, parents, and children, and though

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it is not until the fourth, or Abrahamic, Covenant that God deals with Israel as a nation, yet the generic and familial motives exemplified in these early Covenants are but the beginnings of such motives as come clear in terms of dominion, however theocratically conceived. This is to say that man's notion of his "pre-political" self will necessarily be seen in the light of a socio-political perspective. And all the more so because "pre-political" childhood is experienced in terms of family relationships that are themselves shaped by tribal or national conditions as a whole.

As regards Part II, "Of Commonwealth": If one reads this section along the lines of our notion that the first section is "in principle" saying the same thing, one gets the essence of Hobbes's politics. Here, near the end of Chapter XVII, occurs an almost gloriously resonant passage succinctly summing up the Hobbesian notion of a Covenant, made with a "common power" and designed to keep the covenanters "in awe and to direct their actions to the common benefit":

> The only way to erect such a common power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort, as that by their own industry, and by the fruits of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly; is, to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will: which is as much as to say, to appoint one man, or assembly of men, to bear their person; and every one to own, and acknowledge himself to be author of whatsoever he that so beareth their person, shall act, or cause to be acted, in those things which concern the common peace and safety; and therein to submit their wills, every one to his will, and their judgments, to his judgment. This is more than consent, or concord; it is a real unity of them all, in one and the same person, made by covenant of every man with every man, in such manner, as if every man should say to every man, *I authorize and give up my right of governing myself, to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy right to him, and authorize all his actions in like manner.* This done, the multitude so united in one person, is called a COMMONWEALTH, in Latin CIVITAS. This is the generation of that great LEVIATHAN, or rather, to speak more reverently, of that *mortal god,* to which we owe under the *immortal God,* our peace and defence. For by this authority, given him by every particular man in the commonwealth, he hath the use of so much power and strength conferred on him, that by terror thereof, he is enabled to form the wills of them all, to peace at home, and mutual aid against their enemies abroad. And in him consisteth the essence of the commonwealth; which, to define it, is *one person, of whose acts a great multitude, by mutual covenants one with another, have made them-*

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selves every one the author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for their peace and common defence.

And he that carrieth this person, is called SOVEREIGN, and said to have *sovereign power;* and every one besides, his SUBJECT.

In Part III ("Of a Christian Commonwealth") Hobbes adds a dimension, by introducing from the Bible his terms for what he calls "Christian politics." Essentially, this section involves his devices for subjecting priest-rule to the powers of secular sovereignty. That is to say: In another way, by new ingenuities, he reaffirms the principles of the commonwealth that were adumbrated in Part I and explicitly expounded in Part II. Perhaps the most quotable passage for our purposes is the last paragraph of Chapter XXVIII:

Hitherto I have set forth the nature of man, whose pride and other passions have compelled him to submit himself to government: together with the great power of his governor, whom I compared to *Leviathan,* taking that comparison out of the two last verses of the one-and-fortieth of *Job;* where God having set forth the great power of *Leviathan,* calleth him King of the Proud. *There is nothing,* saith he, *on earth, to be compared with him. He is made so as not to be afraid. He seeth every high thing below him; and is king of all the children of pride.* But because he is mortal, and subject to decay, as all other earthly creatures are; and because there is that in heaven, though not on earth, that he should stand in fear of, and whose laws he ought to obey; I shall in the next following chapters speak of his diseases, and the causes of his mortality; and of what laws of nature he is bound to obey.

The reference to Leviathan as "King of the Proud" is perfect for our purposes. However, we have said that where Governance is, there is the goad to scapegoats.

And that brings us to Part IV ("Of the Kingdom of Darkness"). The curative victim here is not Christ, but Popery, conceived as Anti-Christ.

At this point (praise Logology!) we most decidedly need not enter the fray on Hobbesian terms. But we most decidedly should be admonished by Hobbes, in accordance with our ways of translating. And his methodologically fundamental admonition gets down to the fact that, in the light of his title for Part IV, "Of the Kingdom of Darkness," we must shift from Order-thinking back to Covenant-thinking and thereby concern ourselves with the sheerly dialectical possibilities of a Counter-Covenant, though the word itself is not in Hobbes.

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Viewed here not as doctrine, but as design, Hobbes helps us realize that implicit in the idea of a Covenant is the idea not just of obedience or disobedience to that Covenant, but also of obedience or disobedience to a rival Covenant. The choice thus becomes not just a difference between seeking the light and not seeking the light, but rather the difference between eagerly seeking the light and just as eagerly seeking darkness (a "Disorder" having an "Order" all its own, however insistent the orthodoxy must be that the Satanic counter-realm can exist only by the sufferance of the One Ultimate Authority).

About the edges of all such speculations lie variants of the Manichæan "heresy," according to which Evil is a power in its own right. As we have observed before, logology must side with Augustine's attacks upon this position. For logology looks upon "evil" as a species of the negative and looks upon the negative as a linguistic invention. This would be the logological analogue of Augustine's theological doctrine that *malum* is a *causa deficiens*, a mere deficiency, like an eclipse. And from the purely dialectical point of view, we take it that all admonishment against the temptations of a Counter-Covenant are a recognition of the moral certainty that the mere stating of a position is likely to call forth some opposition. Hobbes's strongly nationalist position made it inevitable that Roman Catholicism would be his scapegoat.

But whether the scapegoat principle be conceived after the analogy of a villain, or after the analogy of arbitrarily chosen vessel that gets its function purely by appointment, or after the analogy of divine paraclete combining exhortation and guidance with victimage, the principle of Mortification is basic to the pattern of governance, as summed up in Paul's paradox (2 Corinthians, XII, 10): "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong."

The idea of the Sacrificial Redeemer, in bringing together ideas of patience, repentance, and obedience to the verbalities of the faith, reproduces in the large the same principle that prevails in the minute scruples of Mortification. Here also would belong the idea of the "remnant," those especially good Jews who maintained the continuity of a blessed relation to the deity despite the backsliding of the people as a whole. And the priesthood, too, would be an extension of the principle of sacrifice, in that it involves special

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persons set apart for the sacrificial services. The priests extend the sacrificial principle to themselves insofar as they practice special acts of mortification deemed to fit them for their special office.

The companion principle to such an idea of graceful, voluntary subjection being, of course, sovereignty, the other side of the sovereign-subject relation is presented in terms of the ultimate rewards in store for those of good will who subject themselves to the principle of governance. That is, as with the two advents of Christ, the logical contrast between sovereignty and subjection is resolved by translation into terms of narrative sequence whereby the principle of subjection, of mortification, first prevails, but is finally followed by the sovereign principle of boundless rejoicing. And in the meantime, the notion of "grace" itself (as a way of goading the sluggish Imagination to the proper fears) is extended to include the idea that natural calamities are "acts of God," designed to warn or chasten—whereupon the principle of Mortification is introduced under another guise.

Mortification is as true of Order as mortmain is of contract.

PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE, STATED NARRATIVELY

Imagine that you wanted to say, "The world can be divided into six major classifications." That is, you wanted to deal with "the principles of Order," beginning with the natural order and placing man's socio-political order with reference to it. But you wanted to treat of these matters in narrative terms, which necessarily involve temporal sequence (in contrast with the cycle of terms for "Order," that merely cluster about one another, variously implying one another but in no one fixed sequence).

Stated narratively (in the style of Genesis, *Bereshith*, Beginning), such an idea of principles, or "firsts," would not be stated simply in terms of classification, as were we to say "The first of six primary classes would be such-and-such, the second such-and-such," and so on. Rather, a completely narrative style would properly translate the idea of six classes or categories into terms of time, as were we to assign each of the classes to a separate "day." Thus, instead of saying, "And that completes the first broad division, or classification, of our subject matter," we would say, "And the evening and the morning were the first day" (or, more accurately, the "One"

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Day). And so on, through the six broad classes, ending, "last but not least," on the category of man and his dominion.*

Further, a completely narrative style would personalize the principle of classification. This role is performed by the references to God's creative fiat, which from the very start infuses the sheerly natural order with the verbal principle (the makings of that "reason" which we take to be so essential an aspect of human personality).

Logologically, the statement that God made man in his image would be translated as: The principle of personality implicit in the idea of the first creative fiats, whereby all things are approached in terms of the word, applies also to the feeling for symbol-systems on the part of the human animal, who would come to read nature as if it were a book. Insofar as God's words infused the natural order with their genius, and insofar as God is represented as speaking words to the first man and woman, the principle of human personality (which is at the very start identified with dominion) has its analogue in the notion of God as a super-person and of nature as the act of such a super-agent. (That is, we take symbol-using to be a distinctive ingredient of "personality.")

Though technically there is a kind of "proto-fall" implicit in the principle of divisiveness that characterizes the Bible's view of the Creation, and though the principle of subjection is already present (in the general outlines of a government with God at its head and mankind as subject to his authority while in turn having dominion over all else in the natural realm), the Covenant (as first announced in the first chapter) is necessarily Edenic, in a state of "innocency," since no negative command has yet been pronounced. From the dialectical point of view (in line with the Order-Disorder

* The clearest evidence that this principle of "divisiveness" is itself a kind of "proto-fall" is to be seen in the use made of it by the segregationists of the southern Bible belt. Members of the Ku Klux Klan refer to the classificatory system of Genesis as justification for their stress upon the separation of Negroes and whites. In an ironic sense, they are "right." For when nature is approached via the principle of differentiation embodied in the notion of Social Order, then "Creation" itself is found to contain implicitly the guiltiness of "discrimination." Furthermore, the Word mediates between these two realms. And the Word is social in the sense that language is a collective means of expression, while its sociality is extended to the realm of wordless nature insofar as this nonverbal kind of order is treated in terms of such verbal order as goes with the element of command intrinsic to dominion.

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pair) we may note that there is a possibility of "evil" implicit in the reference to all six primary classifications as "good." But in all three points (the divisiveness, the order of dominion, and the universal goodness) the explicit negative is lacking. In fact, the nearest approach to an outright negative (and that not of a moralistic, hortatory sort) is in the reference to the "void" *(bohu)* which preceded God's classificatory acts. Rashi says that the word translated as "formless" *(tohu)* "has the meaning of astonishment and amazement." Incidentally, in connection with I, 29, the *Interpreter's Bible* suggests another implicit negative, in that the explicit permitting of a vegetarian diet implies that Adam may not eat flesh.

In the first chapter of Genesis, the stress is upon the creative fiat as a means of classification. It says in effect, "What hath God wrought (by his Word)?" The second chapter's revised account of the Creation shifts the emphasis to matters of dominion, saying in effect, "What hath God ordained (by his words)?" The seventh "day" (or category), which is placed at the beginning of the second chapter, has a special dialectical interest in its role as a transition between the two emphases.

In one sense, the idea of the Sabbath is implicitly a negative, being conceived as antithetical to all the six foregoing categories, which are classifiable together under the single head of "work," in contrast with this seventh category, of "rest." That is, work and rest are "polar" terms, dialectical opposites. (In his *Politics,* Aristotle's terms bring out this negative relation explicitly, since his word for business activity is *ascholein,* that is, "not to be at leisure," though we should tend rather to use the negative the other way round, defining "rest" as "not to be at work.")

This seventh category (of rest after toil) obviously serves well as transition between Order (of God as principle of origination) and Order (of God as principle of sovereignty). Leisure arises as an "institution" only when conditions of dominion have regularized the patterns of work. And, fittingly, just after this transitional passage, the very name of God undergoes a change (the quality of which is well indicated in our translations by a shift from "God" to "Lord God."* Here, whereas in Chapter I, verse 29, God tells

* Grammatically, the word for God in the first chapter, "Elohim," is a plural. Philologists may interpret this as indicating a usage that survives from an earlier polytheistic period in the development of Jewish Monotheism. Or Christian theologians can interpret it as the first emergence of a Trinitarian

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the man and woman that the fruit of "every tree" is permitted them, the Lord God (II, 17) notably revises thus: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Here, with the stress upon governance, enters the negative of command.

When, later, the serpent tempts "the woman" (III, 4), saying that "Ye shall not surely die," his statement is proved partially correct, to the extent that they did not die on the day on which they ate of the forbidden fruit. In any case, III, 19 pronounces the formula that has been theologically interpreted as deriving mankind's physical death from our first parents' first disobedience: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

The *Interpreter's Bible* (page 512) denies that there is any suggestion that man would have lived forever had he not eaten of the forbidden fruit. Verse III, 20 is taken to imply simply that man would have regarded death as his natural end, rather than as "the last fearful frustration." Thus, the fear of death is said to be "the consequence of the disorder in man's relationships" when they are characterized "by domination" (along with the fear that the subject will break free of their subjection). This seems to be at odds with the position taken by the *Scofield Bible*, which, in the light of Paul's statements in Romans V, 12-21 ("by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin" and "by one man's offence death reigned by one") interprets the passage as meaning that "physical death" is due to a "universal sinful state, or nature," which is "our heritance from Adam."

It is within neither our present purpose nor our competency to interpret this verse theologically. But here is how it would look logologically:

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position, thus early in the text, with the Creator as first person of the Trinity, the Spirit that hovered over the waters as third person, and the creative Word as second person. (Incidentally, the words translated as "Lord God" in Chapter II are *Jehovah-Elohim*. Later, in connection with the Abrahamic Covenant, the words translated as "Lord God" are *Adonai Jehovah*. *Adonai*, which means "master," applies to both God and man—and when applied to man it also includes the idea of husband as master.) The distinction between authority and authorship is approached from another angle in Augustine's *Confessions* I, X, where God is called the *ordinator* and *creator* of all natural things, but of sin he is said to be only the *ordinator*.

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First, we would note that in referring to "disorder" and "domination," the *Interpreter's Bible* is but referring to "Order" and "Dominion" as seen from another angle. For a mode of domination is a mode of dominion, and a socio-political order is by nature a ziggurat-like structure which, as the story of the Tower makes obvious, can stand for the principle of Disorder.

If we are right in our notion that the idea of Mortification is integral to the idea of Dominion (as the scrupulous subject must seek to "slay" within himself whatever impulses run counter to the authoritative demands of sovereignty), then all about a story of the "first" dominion and the "first" disobedience there should hover the theme of the "first" mortification.

But "mortification" is a weak term as compared with "death." And thus, in the essentializing ways proper to the narrative style, this stronger, more dramatic term replaces the weaker, more "philosophic" one. "Death" would be the proper narrative-dramatic way of saying "Mortification." By this arrangement, the natural order is once again seen through the eyes of the socio-political order, as the idea of mortification in the toil and subjection of Governance is replaced by the image of death in nature.

From the standpoint sheerly of imagery (once the idea of mortification has been reduced to the idea of death, and the idea of death has been reduced to the image of a dead body rotting back into the ground), we now note a kind of "imagistic proto-fall," in the pun of II, 7, where the Lord God is shown creating man *(adham)* out of the ground *(adhamah)*. Here would be an imagistic way of saying that man in his physical nature is essentially but earth, the sort of thing a body becomes when it decays; or that man is first of all but earth as regards his place in the sheerly natural order. You would define him in narrative or temporal terms by showing what he came from. But insofar as he is what he came from, such a definition would be completed in narrative terms by the image of his return to his origins. In this sense, the account of man's forming (in II, 7) ambiguously lays the conditions for his "return" to such origins, as the Lord God makes explicit in III, 19, when again the subject is the relation between *adham* and the *adhamah:* "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Here would be a matter of sheer imagistic consistency, for making the stages of a narrative to be all of one piece.

But the death motif here is explicity related to another aspect of

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Order or Dominion: the sweat of toil. And looking back a bit further, we find that this severe second Covenant (the "Adamic") also subjected woman to the rule of the husband—another aspect of Dominion. And there is to be an eternal enmity between man and the serpent (the image, or narrative personification, of the principle of Temptation, which we have also found to be intrinsic to the motives clustering about the idea of Order).

Logologically, then, the narrative would seem to be saying something like this: Even if you begin by thinking of death as a merely natural phenomenon, once you come to approach it in terms of conscience-laden mortification you get a new slant on it. For death then becomes seen, in terms of the socio-political order, as a kind of capital punishment. But something of so eschatological a nature is essentially a "first" (since "ends," too, are principles—and here is a place at which firsts and lasts meet, so far as narrative terms for the defining of essences are concerned). Accordingly, death in the natural order becomes conceived as the fulfillment or completion of mortification in the socio-political order, but with the difference that, as with capital punishment in the sentencing of transgressions against sovereignty, it is not in itself deemed wholly "redemptive," since it needs further modifications along the lines of placement in an undying Heavenly Kingdom after death. And this completes the pattern of Order: the symmetry of the socio-political, the natural, and the supernatural.

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The Pattern of Religious Organization in the United States

TALCOTT PARSONS

As IN a number of other fields the United States has, in formal constitutions and otherwise, from the beginning of its independent national history presented a rather new and striking pattern of the relation between organized religion and society. On the constitutional level the striking innovation was the repudiation of the ancient European institution of the Establishment, through the separation of Church and State on both the federal and the state level, in that the State Constitutions or subsequent enactments, as well as the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution, excluded an established church. On the informal level the striking innovation was acceptance of what may be called "denominational pluralism," namely the presence in the community, with equal formal rights, of an indefinite number of competing religious collectivities, or "churches," none of which, however, was allowed to enjoy positive governmental support, though they did have such privileges as tax-exemption.* Implied also, in the freedom of the individual to belong to and support any one of the plurality of denominational groups, was his freedom to dissociate himself from all of them. Citizenship did not imply either subscription to any religious creed or subjection to the authority or pressure of any religious body. As far as the organization of political authority was concerned, religion ceased to be a subject of "public" concern and was relegated to the sphere of private affairs, except for political guardianship of religious freedom. In its broad outline this system has proved to be stable over the hundred and seventy years of our national existence, a fairly long period as such things go. There is no sign of a tendency for it to break down now.

This pattern stands in sharp contrast to the main European tradition. There it may be said that the chief background institution

* A privilege which has been shared with educational and charitable organizations generally.

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has been that of the Established Church where, though political and religious authorities were structurally differentiated from each other, it was understood that the one church should enjoy a legitimate monopoly of religious authority and benefits for the whole politically organized society and that it could legitimately call on political authority to enforce this monopoly by physical coercion, as well as to ensure the financial support of the Church. The prototype of this older pattern was of course the Catholic Church before the Reformation. But the same basic pattern in these essentials was taken over by the main Reformation churches, both Lutheran and Calvinistic, as distinguished from the sects, and in most European countries the further development has been characterized by large elements of this pattern.

The pattern has, of course, been greatly modified in the course of European history since the Reformation. The break in the religious unity of Western Christendom which that movement signalized was in fact coincident with the final break in its political unity—the unity of the Holy Roman Empire had already been very seriously compromised by the independence of the English and French monarchies, but after the Reformation the religious schism within its central structure made the "Empire" little more than a fiction. But the formula *cuius regio, eius religio* also proved to be unstable and, more and more, religious unity under an established church within the political unit broke down.* The Elizabethan policy of religious tolerance in England was perhaps the first main step in this process. Now every important European state (except Spain) has at least some important degree of religious toleration and in a few, like France, formal separation of Church and State has been put through.

On the other hand, there are still many residua of the old pattern. Most countries, while tolerating other churches, still permit the privileges of an established church to one, though it is Catholic in some and Lutheran in some, and England has its special Anglican and Scotland its Presbyterian Establishment. This is likely to be associated with special privileges in the field of tax-support, education, and other matters.

But apart from the legal privileges of religious bodies, there are

* There was a complicated series of developmental stages falling between this historic settlement and the American system of denominational pluralism which cannot be entered into here.

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other phenomena related to the incomplete resolution of problems stemming from the older pattern. One of the most notable, to Americans, is the persisting tendency to form religiously based political parties. This is least evident in Great Britain, though it may be argued that the ultimate break with Ireland had a good deal to do with this issue, and the religious separatism of Scotland is still a major focus of Scottish nationalism. On the Continent, however, it is prominent in various countries, France with the M.R.P., Holland, Belgium, and Italy.

Very much associated with this tendency has been the tendency for secularism, in the sense of opposition to organized religion in general, also to assume political forms transcending other particular issues. Thus for a century French politics was polarized to a considerable degree about the issue of anticlericalism. In general, political secularism has been a major component of the orientation of the parties of the left in Europe—again apart from Great Britain—and in the extreme case of Communism it may be said that the aim has been to set up a counter-Establishment, making militant secularism itself a dogma to be rigidly enforced by a party backed by governmental authority. It may be suggested that the lack of appeal of this European secularist leftism, particularly Communism, in Anglo-Saxon countries, and most especially in the United States, has been associated with the uncongeniality there of any polarization of the body politic over religious issues.

It is understandable that the American institutional structure in this respect should, to many Europeans and to some Americans, appear to be the last stage in the general process of secularization relative to the European heritage, with its roots in Mediæval Catholic unity. How can it be maintained that religion has any vitality if, on the one hand, it has become so splintered that the religious unity of a society cannot be maintained, but an indefinite diversity of denominational groups must be tolerated, and, on the other hand, people's level of commitment to institutionalized religion has sunk so low that they are unwilling to fight for their churches through political means?

As over against this interpretation I would like to suggest that in the United States there has appeared, though probably not yet fully matured, a new mode of institutionalization of the relations between religion and society, which, however, is not secularization in the sense that its tendency is to eliminate organized religion from the

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social scene, but is rather to give it a redefined place in the social scene. The recent American "religious revival," which has occasioned a good deal of comment, is important evidence for this thesis. There are two primary possible interpretations of this phenomenon. The more popular one, even among American intellectuals, is that, from a religious point of view, it is not really "genuine," but must be explained on extraneous grounds as meeting the needs for neighborliness and security in group memberships of the highly mobile populations of American cities in the industrial age, particularly in the new suburbs. The other is that it is connected with a new equilibrium in the relation between the religious and the secular elements in the social system. I shall comment briefly on this problem later.

A FEW HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS OF THE AMERICAN PATTERN

It may be argued that at the time of the American Revolution the principle of the separation of church and state was something of a tour de force and was precipitated by two main factors extraneous to the place of religion in the deeper social structure. One of those factors was political expediency deriving from the religious diversity of the thirteen colonies. Clearly the Puritans of New England, the Catholics of Maryland, the Quakers of Pennsylvania, the Anglicans of Virginia, and the Presbyterians of a good part of the South could not have agreed that any one of their denominations could be accorded the privileges of an Established Church, so it was relatively easy to agree that there should be none at all. The other factor was the prominence among the Founding Fathers of a group of intellectuals, typified by Thomas Jefferson, who were deeply influenced by the Deism of the French Enlightenment.

The process of institutionalization of the new pattern has been a long one and has been involved with a general process of social change, the major keynote of which has been structural differentiation. Religious issues have, of course, made their appearance in American politics from time to time, as for example in the various anti-Catholic movements from the "Know-Nothing Party" on. But structurally the separation of church and state has proved stable and there has been no really serious challenge to it.*

* It is conceivable that growing prominence and power of the Catholic Church might precipitate a major change. Though the seriousness of the tension over

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A good example of the process of structural differentiation involving religion has been the field of education. It must be realized that in the earlier days of the American Republic education at the lower levels was not treated as a public responsibility in any sense but was privately arranged by the privileged upper-class minority for their own children. The focus of formal educational arrangements was in higher education and it, in turn, was oriented religiously to the education of ministers of religion. Even at the time when various groups other than prospective ministers were attending the colleges, the latter were overwhelmingly governed under denominational auspices.

In early, colonial days, a partnership of local church and public authority in the provision for higher education was taken for granted, as in the case of the founding of Harvard College and of King's College in New York, which later became Columbia University. But after the advent of independence the responsibility fell almost entirely to religious denominations until the beginning of the wave of founding of state universities in the western territories toward the middle of the nineteenth century. This followed closely on the spread of public education at the primary and secondary levels. Though the wider spread of education in the United States occurred under governmental auspices, it should be noted that the local community assumed the responsibility. The pattern still holds in main outline, with state governments carrying a moderate share of responsibility and the Federal Government as yet scarcely any at all. Probably the United States is the only important government in the world which does not have a central department or ministry of education.

It can thus be seen that there is a sense in which in Europe the State took over the educational function from the Church. In the United States it remained in religious hands considerably longer, but then was secularized in the first instance to private bodies, secondarily to public authority, but even there above all to local authority. The colleges, and later universities, have in general evolved from denominational foundations to general private fiduciary agencies with only tenuous denominational affiliations. There has been a similar evolution in the case of hospitals. To an American

this problem should not be underestimated, for reasons which cannot be entered into here I think it unlikely that this will happen.

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the difference in the latter connection is striking, for in Europe the nurse, as a "sister," is still hardly distinguishable from the member of a religious order, indeed often is an actual member.

It is perhaps to be expected that in this setting the policies of the Catholic Church should exhibit a certain lag relative to the rest of American society. It has, particularly in the last generation or two, taking advantage of the framework of American religious toleration, set out to create a complete system of religious education whereby, in ideal, the Catholic child will from primary school through the university be educated exclusively in church-controlled organizations. This is only one of the variety of respects in which the Catholic Church occupies a special position in American society, but it may be a question how far it will be able to maintain this special policy in the face of powerful general forces pointing in another direction.

I have suggested that the keynote of the special position of religion in American society lies in structural differentiation. When a previously less differentiated structure becomes differentiated into more specialized subsystems, it is in the nature of the case that, if an earlier and later structural unit bear the same name, the later version will, by comparison with the earlier, be felt to have lost certain functions and hence, perhaps, from a certain point of view to have been weakened. This may be illustrated from a nonreligious case. Thus in peasant societies, where the bulk of the population have been engaged in agriculture, the family household has been at the same time both the main agency of economic production in the society and the main focus of early child-rearing and of the intimate personal life of its members. In modern industrial societies this function of economic production has been largely lost to the family household and transferred to factories, offices, etc. In these terms the family has lost functions and has become a more specialized agency in the society. The modern urban family is clearly different from the peasant family; whether it is better or worse may be a matter of opinion, but the difference of its place in the larger social structure surely cannot be ignored in forming that opinion, including the fact that the social and economic advantages of industrialism cannot be secured through a household organization of production.

In order to appraise this type of structural differentiation it is necessary to have in mind a standard for defining the primary functions of a part of the social structure, the nature of which can be conceived to set the limits beyond which the "reduction" of function is unlikely to go. "Secondary" functions on the other hand

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may, through the process of differentiation, be transferred to other agencies. In the case of the family, just discussed, I think it is clear that the primary functions for the social system as such (physical care of the body being thus excluded) are its contributions to the personality development of the child—what sociologists have come to call "socialization"—and its functions in the stabilization of the personality equilibrium of the adult members. The family as an agency of society is above all a set of mechanisms which manipulate the motivational structures of its individual members as these bear on the performance of social roles. Can anything parallel be said about the primary function of religion in society?

This is, in the present state of sociological knowledge, a more uncertain field than that of the family. I should, however, wish to emphasize as the "core" function of religion in the social system the regulation of the balance of the motivational commitment of the individual to the values of his society—and through these values to his roles in it as compared with alternative considerations concerning his ultimate "fate" as a knowing, sentient being, and the bases on which this fate comes to have meaning to him, in the sense in which Max Weber refers to "problems of meaning."* Religion, thus conceived, is close in its social functions to the family, though in terms of formal organization it has taken the form of the church.

I think it can be said that the main reference of the "motivational" regulation performed by the family is regressive; it relates to the sources of motivational patterning in the early life experience of the individual, particularly in the family relations in which he is currently growing up or did grow up as a child. Religion, on the other hand, is primarily oriented to the adult phases of life and the problems of meaning involved in its basic limitations, thus including the finiteness of life's duration and the meaning of death. It involves such questions as What, in the last analysis, am I? Why do I exist? What is the meaning of my relations to others? Why must I die and what happens to me at and after death? The cognitive meaning of existence, the meaning of happiness and suffering, of goodness and evil, are the central problems of religion.†

* A concept used especially by Max Weber. See particularly "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," Chapter XI in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, translated and edited by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, New York, Oxford University Press, 1946.

† See Paul Tillich, *The Courage To Be*, for an excellent brief discussion of these central problems.

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An essential cognitive, i.e. philosophical, element is always involved in religion, but, as Durkheim held, the main emphasis is not cognitive, but practical. It is the question of what, in view of my understanding and its limits, are my basic commitments in life. Of course the influences of others and involvements of various kinds in relations of solidarity or antagonism with others are of very great importance; yet I should contend that in the last analysis religion is an individual matter, a concern of the innermost core of the individual personality for his own identity and commitments. In view of this fact, the nature of the social structuring of religion should be regarded as empirically problematical; it cannot be deduced from the most general characteristics of religion itself.

RELIGION AND THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION

My suggestion is thus that a process of differentiation similar to that which has affected the family has been going on in the case of religion and has reached a particulary advanced stage in the United States, producing a state which may or may not provide a model for other societies. It is well known that in primitive societies and in many other civilizations than that of the West, no clear-cut structural distinction could be made between religious and secular aspects of the organization of society; there has been no "church" as a differentiated organizational entity. From this point of view the differentiation (as distinguished from "separation") of Church and State, which has been fundamental to Western Christianity from its beginning, may be regarded as a major step in differentiation for the society as a whole.

Through this process of differentiation religion already had become a more specialized agency than it had been in most other societies. But since the Renaissance and the Reformation a process has been going on which has tended to carry the differentiation further still. The steps by which this process has taken place and the exact patterns which have resulted have been different in different countries. This brief article cannot attempt to trace and compare them all. Besides space, this task would require a level of historical scholarship which I do not command. I must confine myself to pointing out a few features of the American case and of its consequences for the structure of American society.

Perhaps the first major point is that though a solid structure of Federal Government was established for the new republic it was,

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probably more than any European government, built on a system of constitutional restraints on governmental power. The relative insulation of the United States from the politics of the European world—by sheer distance and by the Pax Britannica—then gave our institutions an opportunity to crystallize within the framework of the Constitution without sudden or unbearable pressures to break down these restraints. Then the fact that separation of Church and State was itself written into most of the State Constitutions and into the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution gave a basis for a general tradition that religious issues were not a proper subject for political action. One fundamental consequence of this patterning was that when the time arrived for governmental initiative in the field of education, predominantly, as I have said, at the local level, there was the strongest presumption that tax-supported schools could not serve the interests of, or be controlled by, any religious denomination.

In the background of all this, of course, lay the characteristics of American religious traditions themselves. Though exceedingly diverse, the main influences were derived from the "left wing" of European, especially English, Protestantism, where the traditions of the Established Church were weakest. To be sure there was a Congregational Establishment in early New England, but by the time of the Revolution it was greatly attenuated and religious toleration fairly firmly established. The fact that after the first generation royal governors were present in the colonies reinforced this, because of the fear that if there was to be a firm religious establishment, the Anglican Church would be imposed by British authority. Even as early as the late eighteenth century, the strength of such groups as the Quakers, various Congregational splinter groups, Baptists and, starting at a crucial time, the Methodists, was great. These were all groups which on religious bases had opposed the backing of religion by political authority; without their relative strength the American pattern probably could not have survived. Again, it is important that a large Catholic minority did not exist until the pattern was well crystallized.

Another important circumstance lies in the fact that the great movement of settlement of the newer parts of the country preserved the pattern of religious diversity which had begun in the thirteen colonies. The effect of this was that none of the central political issues which divided the country, above all economic and sectional

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issues, could be closely identified with a religious division. The main exception has been the concentration, since about the turn of the last century, of the Catholic population in the northern and eastern cities. But for a variety of reasons Catholics could not as such stably dominate the politics of a solid regional block, and in particular the peculiarities of the South were enough to prevent the emergence of a stable southern-western Protestant coalition against Catholic influence in the East. The upshot is that, though religious issues flared up from time to time, occasionally dominating local issues and alignments, the broad pattern of keeping religion out of politics has come to be stably institutionalized in American society.

Perhaps the second most important context of differentiation involving religion has involved its relation to education, and with it the institutionalization of the intellectual life and its constituent professions. In part, as noted, such differentiation goes back to the separation of Church and State and the fact that when government, even local government, became involved in educational responsibilities, it could not back religious denominationalism in this sphere.* The same principle of course had to apply to the state universities as to the locally controlled primary and secondary schools.

As I have noted, private higher education in the United States was originally mainly controlled by religious denominations. Why did its secularization occur? It seems to me probable that among the decisive factors were those involved in the transition from primary emphasis on the college to that on the university. This in turn was involved with the rise to immensely increased strategic importance of the secular professions, especially those based on scientific training. It is interesting that the models for this development were drawn largely from the Continental European governmentally controlled universities. But under American conditions, if the private

* How a combination of regional, ethnic, and religious distributions in politically powerful blocks can work out to a different outcome is illustrated by the case of Canada, particularly the Province of Quebec. Here, though there is religious toleration, the educational system is publicly supported but control of the schools is given to Catholic and Protestant religious groups, respectively, with parents given their choice of religious school to which to send their children. That this was tolerated by the English majority (which has been a minority in Quebec) is partly explained by the far greater proportion of Anglicans there than in the United States, with their greater sympathy for the Establishment principle.

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institutions of higher education were to retain their position, some of them had to develop into universities. And again, if as universities they were to serve as primary agencies for the training of the whole national professional class of lawyers, physicians, engineers, scientists, civil servants, and the academic profession itself, as well as ministers of religion, in a religiously diversified society like the American, they could not do so successfully if they remained denominational organizations in a strict and traditional sense. Above all, particularly the universities aspiring to national rather than local importance could not use denominational loyalty as a main criterion for recruitment either of their faculties or of their student bodies. In any case, whatever the social mechanisms involved, the American system of higher education in both its publicly supported colleges and universities (state and municipal) and its private sector is now firmly secular in its major orientation. The sole major exception is the educational system controlled by the Cathôlic Church, though there are smaller-scale ones for Lutherans, Jews, etc. The Catholic is a large minority, but there seems to be no basis for believing that its pattern can serve as a model for the reversal of this fundamental trend, if indeed the Catholic educational pattern can itself survive for very long against the trend.

There is one particularly crucial consequence for religion of the secular character of the American educational system. This is that the main standards for the evaluation and inculcation of intellectual culture are not and cannot be controlled by organized religious bodies. Real control of the development of science has long since been lost by religious bodies everywhere—and the attempts of semireligious bodies like the Communist Party to restore that control do not seem likely to be successful in the long run. But the American situation goes farther than this in two vital respects. The first is the extension of scientific methods and theories into the fields of human behavior, a world-wide development which, however, has gone farther in the United States than anywhere else. This development inevitably introduces the relevance of scientific, nonreligious canons into many spheres which have traditionally been considered to be spheres of religious prerogative, such as many aspects of "morals." The second is the secularization of philosophy and the humanities. However seriously the secular philosopher (who may be a practicing member of a religious denomination) may

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take cognizance of historic and contemporary religious positions on his problems, in the last analysis his professional responsibility cannot be defined as the defense of the official position of any religious body, but is a responsibility to "seek the truth" as he sees it in the light of the general traditions of rational knowledge. No responsible modern American university in the main tradition could appoint him to its faculty on any other assumption.

Finally, reference may again be made to the fact that rights of predominantly secular orientation are clearly institutionalized in the American system. There is no obligation either of the citizen in the strictly political sense or of the member of the community in good standing to accept participation in or control by any formally organized religious body. Besides the fields of politics and education, this is perhaps most important in matters affecting the family. In attempting to retain control over various spheres of social life other than a more narrowly defined religious sphere, one of the most tenacious tendencies of religious bodies has been to attempt to prescribe the conditions of marriage and divorce and the responsibilities of parents for children in various respects, particularly education. The American, like the citizen of other countries who violates his church's rules in these matters, may be in trouble with the authorities of that church. But the essential point is that neither his political rights as citizen nor his basic good standing in the American community is conditioned on his conforming with the rules of any particular religious body in these matters. The minimum standards are set by political authority—what constitutes legal marriage and legal divorce, for example. Beyond these, the matter is one of a community opinion which is composed of religiously diverse elements. In religious terms, it seems to be a sort of lowest common denominator which governs—if any one group attempts to impose standards at variance with this common attitude the person in question can, at the cost of trouble with his own group, retain a good general community standing if his conduct is not generally condemned by members of the other groups.*

* This lowest common denominator of institutionalized moral standards must be carefully distinguished from the deviant behavior which is bound to be fairly prominent in a complex society. It is defined by the consensus of responsible opinion and does not in general condone extreme moral laxity.

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THE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS PATTERN

Seen in these terms, it is clear that by the standard of older ideals of Western Christianity organized religion has lost much in America. First it has lost the basic legitimation of the claim to religious unification even within the politically organized society. The right both to religious pluralism and to secular orientation (though not necessarily to combat religion except within limits) is a fundamental institutionalized right in American society. Organized religion has lost the right to claim the support of the state by compulsory enforcement of uniformity or even by taxation either for a single established church or for any religious body. It has lost the right to control the main lines of the educational process, above all perhaps to prescribe the legitimate framework of secular intellectual culture, with special reference to philosophy. It also has lost the right to prescribe effectively certain vital matters of private morals, with special reference to marriage and family relationships. Has it anything left?

My own view is most definitely that it has a great deal. Ernest Troeltsch, in his classic work, *Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*, maintained that in the history of Western Christianity there had been only three versions of the conception of a Christian Society, one in which the values of Christian religion could be understood to provide the main framework for the value system of the society as a whole. These cases were Mediæval Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism. All of them involved the conception of a single Established Church as the agent of implementing and symbolizing this fundamental Christian orientation of the society as a whole. Troeltsch considered that the "sects" which did not recognize the religious validity of an Established Church had in effect abandoned the ideal of the Christian Society altogether.

Over against this view of Troeltsch I should like to suggest that in American society there has, in its main outline, evolved the conception of an institutionalized Christianity which is in line with the great tradition of the Christian Society but differs from its earlier version in the fundamental respects outlined above. First in order of evidence in favor of this view is the fact that the values of contemporary American society have fundamental religious roots, above all in the traditions which Max Weber, in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, called those of "ascetic Protestantism," and that these values have not been fundamentally changed in the course

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of our national history. The enormous changes which have occurred constitute fundamental changes not of values but of the structure of the society in which those values are maintained and implemented.* Essentially by this system of values I mean the continued commitment to values of "instrumental activism," the subordination of the personal needs of the individual to an objective "task" to which he is expected to devote his full energies, and the subjection of the actions of all to universalistic standards of judgment. Associated with this is the importance of universalizing the essential conditions of effective performance through equalization of civil rights and of access to education and health. It should be particularly noted that the shift from a primarily transcendental reference to one with mainly terrestrial focus did not occur as a phase of secularization but, as Weber so strongly emphasizes, within the highly active religious tradition of ascetic Protestantism. It was the conception of the service of the Glory of God, first through helping to build the Kingdom of God on Earth, which was the main focus of Calvinist ethics.

"Secularization" has, essentially, taken the form of differentiation, so that this Kingdom is no longer thought of as exclusively governed by religious considerations, but there is an autonomous secular sphere of the "good society" which need not reflect only man's activities and obligations in his capacity as a member of the church. But this good society may still be interpreted as "God's work" in a sense similar to that in which physical nature has always been so interpreted within that tradition.

The new sectarian or, better, "denominational," form taken by the religious organization itself is broadly in line with the general development which produced Protestantism and then evolved further within it. The keynote of it is the personal intimacy and privacy of the individual's faith and relation to his conception of Divinity. The further this trend of development has gone the more basically repugnant to it have two features of the older traditions tended to become: first, the invoking of secular authority to apply coercive, ultimately physical sanctions in matters of religious faith and, second, the claim of any human agency to hold a monopoly of all

* This statement implies use of the concept "values" in a technical sociological sense which may not be in accord with all versions of common usage. In some usages any significant change in concrete behavior is by definition indicative of a change in values.

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religiously legitimate access to religious goods. This position clearly challenges all claims to authorization by exclusively valid divine revelation, but in the main tradition this consequence has been clearly recognized and accepted. The implication is that the religious body must be a fully voluntary association and that coercion in these matters is contrary to the most essential spirit of religion itself.*

Denominational pluralism is almost a direct implication of the above two departures from older tradition. If no human agency has a right to claim a monopoly of religious legitimacy and enforce it by coercion, then there is no basis on which to deny the legitimacy of plural competing claims at least to the point that many groups may have enough access to the truth to justify their adherents in each "worshiping God in their own way."

If denominational pluralism of this sort is to be institutionalized as the religious system of a society, then certain conditions must be met. Two of the most fundamental are definition of the limits within which a group of religious associates may claim to be a legitimate "denomination" and, second, the rules of their competition with each other in terms of mutual respect and the like. A third basic problem area concerns the way in which the line is drawn between the legitimate sphere of religious concern and that of the primarily secular institutions which have been discussed.

With respect to the first question the American pattern is probably not fully crystallized, but its main outline seems to be clear. It draws the definition of a legitimate denomination rather broadly, leaving room for a good deal of free competition. All the main historical branches of Christianity are clearly included. But so also are now

* A particularly good illustration of the differentiation of religious and non-religious components which have been fused in the past is the increasingly clear discrimination, conspicuous in the United States, between psychiatry and what here tends to be called "pastoral counseling." The most essential point is the emergence of a secular professional tradition for the treatment of disturbances of personality. The elements involved in these disturbances include many elements which in other societies have been handled in a religious or magical context. The line is by no means completely clear as yet, but it is notable that, a few years ago, a strong attack on psychoanalysis by Catholic Bishop Fulton Sheen was countered by a group of Catholic psychoanalysts and that the Bishop did not then persist in his attacks. Since the Catholic Church is, in this as in various other respects, the largest conservative religious body, the fact that it is not sponsoring a general attack on psychiatry is significant. A careful statement of a limited sphere in which psychiatry was defined as legitimate has recently been made by the Pope.

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the main branches of Judaism. Also, a good many popular cults of more or less faddist character which do not enjoy the respect of the more highly educated elements are still tolerated so long as they do not become too great sources of disturbance. Similarly, groups which, like Jehovah's Witnesses, are sharply alienated from the normal loyalties of the ordinary society are tolerated though not widely approved. Indeed there is no bar to the toleration of groups altogether outside the main Western traditions, though they do not seem to have gained any serious foothold.

The main core of the tradition is clearly a theistic Judeo-Christian belief complex. The inclusion of Judaism is not strange in view of the fact that similar theological positions have evolved within the Protestant tradition in Unitarianism. Indeed, for reasons like these it may be said that Judaism presents, at least for the groups which have abandoned Orthodox Jewish separatism from the general community, less difficult problems of integration than is the case with the Catholic Church and the real Protestant "Fundamentalists." Clearly there are many degrees of integration and many fringe groups. But there is, as noted, a general Theism, which is even politically recognized—as in the inscription on coins "In God We Trust." Further, sessions of Congress are regularly opened by Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish clergymen offering prayer, and chaplains of all three faiths are provided by the Armed Services.

It is further essential to recognize again that secularism, in the sense of repudiating affiliation with any organized religious body, is clearly institutionalized as legitimate. The central significance of this fact lies, I think, in the relation of religion to the main traditions of the intellectual culture of the society. The institutionalization of rights to secular orientation means that in struggling with the basic problems of meaning which confront the members of any society individually and in their collective capacities, the individual is not rigidly bound within the framework of a particular tradition of beliefs. Individuals and groups are free to define their positions in ways which are explicitly at variance with any of the denominational carriers of the religious tradition.

It seems to me that this protected position of secular orientation is particularly important in determining the circumstances under which, in several areas with which religion has historically been intimately concerned, patterns with secular primacy have come to be institutionalized in positions of high strategic importance in the

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society. The deeper roots both of religion itself and of some of these secular institutions are so closely interwoven, both historically and in current psychological terms, that any one of the "interests" involved would, if given a monopoly of jurisdiction over them, be likely to bias the balance between the religious sphere and that of the secular "good society" to a deleterious degree. I have in mind here particularly the two spheres of intellectual culture leading up to philosophy and of the attitudes toward a whole range of questions of "morals."

From this point of view religious and secular orientations may, to an important degree, thus be seen as constituting different aspects of the same system of orientation to "problems of meaning." Indeed the legitimacy of secularism seems to follow almost directly on the abandonment of coercively enforced dogma. But above all secularism is important in defining the boundary between the religious sphere and the secular good society. Just as in a politically democratic society the definition of the boundaries of legitimate governmental authority is not permitted to be a monopoly of the officials of government, so in a "religiously liberal" society the determination of the boundaries of the legitimate sphere of organized religion is not left to the proponents of that position alone; they must compete with proponents of a position which in some respects is hostile to theirs. It is my belief that the secularization of education and of control of certain spheres of morals, which I regard as essential to the structure of the American type of good society, could not have been brought about without the influence of elements willing to oppose the whole weight of organized religion.

But if the religious-secular balance is to work out in a well-integrated social system, the opposition of secularists to religious influence must not be unlimited. And I think it is correct to say that in the United States (and Britain) on the whole, a regulated competition rather than a "state of war" has prevailed. There must be, and are, "rules of the game." From the secularist's point of view his religiously committed fellow citizens are defined not as beyond the pale but as "good people" who differ from him on these points—and, of course, vice versa. Secularism may thus be defined as a kind of "loyal opposition" to the religious point of view. Each side has interests to protect which are vital, not only to the proponents themselves but to the society as a whole. Neither, alone, can legitimately hope to be exclusively influential in the determination of the course

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of events. The fact that the other "party" is there can serve as an important curb on the extremists on either side. Thus if a particular denomination tries to put through extreme claims, for example in the direction of denominational control of public education, the more moderate denominations can be relied on to point out that such extremism plays into the hands of the secularists—such claims may come to be identified with "religion" as such. On the other side, extreme secularists who want too aggressively to combat all religion will tend to find themselves restrained by the influence of more moderate secularists who point out that their extreme position —for example, the requiring of civil marriage ceremonies on the presumption that a religious marriage is not "legally" valid—if insisted upon will tend to discredit all secularism and give the "religionists" an undue advantage.

Seen in these terms, the religious-secular balance in American society is analogous to the balance of political parties in a two-party system. The preponderance shifts from time to time—most recently apparently in a religious direction—but the system tends to insure that neither side will gain the kind of ascendancy which would enable it to suppress the other, and basically on the value level most good citizens on the one side do not want to suppress the other. Religion, that is to say, has come to be defined institutionally as quite definitely "a good thing" but equally definitely as not the only good thing, and as confined in its goodness to a fairly clearly defined sphere.*

Near the beginning of this paper the problem of the interpretation of the so-called American "religious revival" was mentioned. A very brief word may be said about it against the background of the above discussion. First I may point out that a prevailing interpretation stresses the extra-religious phenomena which have appeared in connection with church membership and attendance, above all the ways in which the church has become a center of community social activities and associations. From this observation it is an easy step to suggest that such interests as those in "sociability," to say nothing of opportunities to "meet the right people," account for the observed facts. A somewhat more sophisticated version of

* In the understanding of the nature and importance of this balance between religion and secularism and its analogy to the two-party system, I am particularly indebted to suggestions from Dr. Robert N. Bellah, of Harvard University.

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a similar view is the suggestion that the "security needs" of isolated people in a mobile "mass society" constitute the focus of this new tendency.

There seems to be relatively little question about the broad facts. Church membership is currently the highest in American history, not only absolutely but in terms of proportions of the population. The same is true of attendance at church services, money spent in building of new churches, and a variety of other indices. Moreover, relative to general population growth there has been a marked increase in these phenomena in a short generation.

I would suggest that the phenomena of sociability, of desirable associations, and even of the relation to psychological security in interpersonal relations are quite real, but that they are secondary and do not impugn the religious genuineness of the revival. The central phenomenon seems to be the increased concern with values and hence the relation of the individual to his problems of "ultimate concern," to use Tillich's phrase. It is related to a new phase of emphasis on personal "inwardness" in American society, but it is not the first time in our history that this kind of thing has happened.*

A good many writers about the contemporary American scene have noted the prominence of a general "search for values" at a high level of generality.† Another phenomenon to which the religious revival seems to be closely related is the prominent increase in concern for the psychological problems of personality, especially with reference to such fields as mental health and child training. Religion generally is very closely associated with the equilibrium of the individual person, and that these two concerns should increase concomitantly makes sense, especially when religion is considered to be so "personal" as in the American case.

It is often suggested that a relative lack of concern with theological problems is an argument against imputing religious "genuineness" to the movement. I question whether this is so. On sociological grounds it is quite reasonable to suppose that such a concern should focus on values rather than beliefs, particularly in the American milieu, where we have a general hesitancy against

* Probably the clearest historical case, which was in some but by no means all respects comparable, was the "Great Revival" in New England in the time of Jonathan Edwards.

† See especially Clyde Kluckhohn, "The Evolution of Contemporary American Values," published in an abridged version, *Dædalus*, Vol. 87, No. 2 (Spring, 1958).

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using too abstract thinking, above all on philosophical levels, and where, in the sense referred to above, the general cultural atmosphere has been highly "secular."

The broader sociological context lies in the fact that American society, in its values and its institutional structure, is organized about a kind of polarization between the external field of instrumental activity, the field of opportunity in economic production and in other occupational areas, and the capacities and other "internal" states of the acting units, notably the individual person.

We have recently been through a tremendous process of economic growth which has involved not only quantitative expansion but a major structural reorganization of the society, which in turn has very important repercussions on people. They are under pressure to perform such new and different roles that their personal values become involved. I should regard this restructuring of role-values, which is concomitant with the process of structural change in the society, as the main source of the increased concern with religion.* It is associated not only with concern with psychological problems but also with the increasing sense of urgency of problems of education and a variety of others.

It is reasonable to expect that the salience of religious concern should vary in something of a cyclical pattern, in shape somewhat similar to economic and political shifts, though involving considerably longer periods. It should be interpreted as part of a more general pattern of periodicities which one expects to find in a rapidly developing social system, of what Bales calls a "phase pattern."†

I therefore think that the religious revival fits into the interpretation of the place of religion in the structure of the society which has been presented in this paper. If this revival is religiously genuine, as I think it is, the fact that it should occur at all is one more bit of evidence that ours is a religiously oriented society, not a case of "secularization" in the usual sense. Further, the fact that it seems to fit into a cyclical pattern is in line with what we know about the more general significance of such periodicities in this type

* It is most important not to confuse this role-value change with change in the *general* value-orientation of the society as a whole on the highest levels. In my opinion this has in the American case remained essentially stable. I am, of course, aware that many others have a different view.

† *Cf.* Robert F. Bales, *Interaction Process Analysis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Press, 1950).

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of society. Finally, the form it takes seems to fit the emphasis on the private and personal character of religion, which is one of the principal features of the American religious pattern and differentiates it from its antecedents in the traditions connected with established churches.

My main thesis in this paper has been that the religious constitution of American society is fundamentally in line with the great Western tradition of a society organized about Christian values, a Christian society in a sense not wholly out of line with that of Troeltsch. Looked at by comparison with earlier forms, religion seems to have lost much. But it seems to me that the losses are mainly the consequence of processes of structural differentiation in the society, which correspond to changes in the character of the religious orientation but do not necessarily constitute loss of strength of the religious values themselves.

The most essential "concession" was made by the Mediaeval Catholic Church itself, namely through the view that society should not be a simple "theocracy" but that the secular arm was genuinely independent, responsible directly to God, not simply through the organized Church. From this point on the basic question has been that of the limits of jurisdiction over the individual of the secular "good society." In the American case these limits have proved to be very different from, and much broader than, those envisaged by the Mediaeval theorists; but they did not envisage modern society any more than the modern churches.

The American system is far from being fully integrated. It must contend with important elements which are anchored in earlier patterns of religious organization, notably fundamentalist Protestantism and the Catholic Church, both of which make claims which are anomalous within the main American framework. It must contend with the proliferation of exotic religious movements of dubious longer-run religious soundness, from the "Holy Rollers" to such "inspirationists" as Norman Vincent Peale. It must finally contend with the various aspects of secularism which to many religious people seem to have no place in a religiously committed society. On balance, however, I think that the main trend is toward greater integration of these various elements in a viable system which can be a vital part of a larger society. In this, as in other vital respects, American society is fundamentally an outgrowth of its European heritage, not an exotic "sport."

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The Sense of Poetry: Shakespeare's "The Phoenix and the Turtle" *

I. A. Richards

Is it not fitting that the greatest English poet should have written the most mysterious poem in English? "The Phoenix and the Turtle" is so strange a poem– even so unlike anything else in Shakespeare, as to have caused doubts that he wrote it. And yet, no one else seems in the least likely as author.

One of the odd things about the poem is that it has engendered curiosity and praise only in relatively recent times. Emerson was among the first: "To unassisted readers," he says, "it would appear to be a lament on the death of a poet, and of his poetic mistress." "This poem," he adds, "if published for the first time, and without a known author's name, would find no general reception. Only the poets would save it."

Since then many notable efforts have been made to assist "unassisted readers" without taking us perhaps very much further than Emerson himself went: "a lament of the death of a poet"–or is it the poetic endeavor?–"and his poetic mistress"–or could it be that whereto the poetic endeavor devotes itself: poetry?

Let us see. Let us read the poem through twice, once for detail and structure and pondering, and then again for life and motion.

The Phoenix and the Turtle

Let the bird of lowdest lay,
On the sole *Arabian* tree,
Herauld sad and trumpet be:
To whose sound chaste wings obay.

But thou shriking harbinger,
Foule precurrer of the fiend,
Augour of the feuers end,
To this troupe come thou not neere.

* Based on a talk in a series given during the winter 1957-1958 over WGBH-TV in Boston, and distributed nationally by the Educational Television and Radio Center.

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From this Session interdict
Euery foule of tyrant wing,
Saue the Eagle feath'red King,
Keepe the obsequie so strict.

Let the Priest in Surples white,
That defunctive Musicke can,
Be the death-deuining Swan,
Lest the *Requiem* lacke his right.

And thou treble dated Crow,
That thy sable gender mak'st,
With the breath thou giu'st and tak'st,
'Mongst our mourners shalt thou go.

Here the Antheme doth commence,
Loue and Constancie is dead,
Phoenix and the *Turtle* fled,
In a mutuall flame from hence.

So they loued as loue in twaine,
Had the essence but in one,
Two distincts, Diuision none,
Number there in loue was slaine.

Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
Distance and no space was seene,
Twixt this *Turtle* and his *Queene;*
But in them it were a wonder.

So betweene them loue did shine,
That the *Turtle* saw his right,
Flaming in the *Phoenix* sight;
Either was the others mine.

Propertie was thus appalled,
That the selfe was not the same:
Single Natures double name,
Neither two nor one was called.

Reason in it selfe confounded,
Saw Diuision grow together,
To themselves yet either neither,
Simple were so well compounded.

That it cried, how true a twaine,
Seemeth this concordant one,
Loue hath Reason, Reason none,
If what parts, can so remaine.

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Whereupon it made this *Threne*
To the *Phoenix* and the *Doue,*
Co-supremes and starres of Loue,
As *Chorus* to their Tragique Scene.

THRENOS

Beautie, Truth, and Raritie,
Grace in all simplicitie,
Here enclosde, in cinders lie.

Death is now the *Phoenix* nest,
And the *Turtles* loyall brest,
To eternitie doth rest,

Leauing no posteritie,
Twas not their infirmitie,
It was married Chastitie.

Truth may seeme, but cannot be,
Beautie bragge, but tis not she,
Truth and Beautie buried be.

To this vrne let those repaire,
That are either true or faire,
For these dead Birds, sigh a prayer.

The Phoenix here is a unique bird, singular indeed—there can be but the one Phoenix. And the Turtle Dove is so devoted a lover of his Queen—so entirely hers, as she is his—that, like an Indian suttee, he is consumed, burnt up on the pyre, in the flames of her regeneration.

Let the bird of lowdest lay,
On the sole *Arabian* tree,
Herauld sad and trumpet be:
To whose sound chaste wings obay.

Who is speaking? Who is this " bird of lowdest lay " who summons this company of birds and has this authority over " chaste wings "? (You will note, near the end, a very strong use indeed of the word " Chastitie.")

I like best the suggestion that the reborn Phoenix herself is here summoning the birds to the celebration of her own (and the Turtle's) obsequies. If so, this Phoenix, this Queen, is perched on her own throne. In *The Tempest* (III, iii, 22-24) Sebastian cries:

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Now I will believe that . . . in Arabia
There is one tree, the phoenix' throne; one
phoenix
At this hour reigning there.
[On the sole *Arabian* tree]

If so, she herself is *Herauld sad and trumpet;* and the sadness is for the Turtle—lost in the fiery rite required for the Phoenix' rebirth.

Various birds are excluded: the ill-omened, the screech-owl, say, because this is a beginning anew, another cycle of the Phoenix' life.

But thou shriking harbinger,
Foule precurrer of the fiend,
Augour of the feuers end,
To this troupe come thou not neere.

Birds of prey are to be kept out too—except the symbol of authority, the Kingly Eagle, which can overawe violence as Henry VII put an end to the Wars of the Roses. Nothing arbitrary or unjust has a place here:

From this Session interdict
Euery foule of tyrant wing,
Saue the Eagle feath'red King,
Keepe the obsequie so strict.

Obsequie is a deep word here: a following after and a due compliance. These birds are to take part in a commemorative procession chanting the anthem, a song with the power of a spell.

Let the Priest in Surples white,
That defunctive Musicke can,
Be the death-deuining Swan,
Lest the *Requiem* lacke his right.

Defunctive Musicke: music which has to do with death; the Swan knows how to sing its swan song before its death and knows beforehand when it is to die.

Lacke his right: lack a rightness his participation can give. Some dictionaries say *right* is just Shakespeare's misspelling of *rite* (ritual). More modern critics will call it a pun. It is better perhaps to reflect and recognize how closely interwoven the meanings of the two words can be. A rite may be the observance it is right to give, to accord.

This choral service contains an anthem, a song of praise and gladness; a requiem, a solemn dirge for the repose of the dead; and a *threne* or *threnos,* a lamentation or dirge of honor. Note, too, a

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curious thing about the structure of the poem: the mourning birds, when assembled and ordered, chant an anthem in which Reason (something being described, talked about, conjured up, released, in the anthem) after going through a strange change, cries out suddenly and then composes the threne, sung at the close, and this threne, so composed

> To the *Phoenix* and the *Doue,*
> Co-supremes and starres of Loue,
> As *Chorus* to their Tragique Scene

ends with directions for a pilgrimage and a prayer.

This singular involvement—each part of the poem being included in and produced by, put into a mouth created in the part before it—has a lot to do with the power and spring of this most concentered and compacted poem.

The next bird, the last of the birds, the only one to be mentioned after the Swan-Priest, may have an importance suited to this special position. The *treble dated* Crow lives, so the legend says, three times, any number of times, longer than man. A "lived happily ever after" flavor hangs about him. Moreover, he engenders his offspring by breathing: a very ethereal mode of propagation, the mode by which poems and poetic ideas inter-inanimate and beget their successors. He is as black as ink, dressed in proper funeral attire, and yet is directed, somewhat as though he did not belong and could not expect to be invited, to join the mourners. Perhaps, being a carrion crow, he is a kind of contaminated character. Here he is:

> And thou treble dated Crow,
> That thy sable gender mak'st,
> With the breath thou giu'st and tak'st,
> 'Mongst our mourners shalt thou go.
>
> Here the Antheme doth commence,
> Loue and Constancie is dead,
> *Phoenix* and the *Turtle* fled,
> In a mutuall flame from hence.

Loue and Constancie: the attraction to beauty and the attachment in truth.

Notice *is dead:* the two are so much one that even from the first mention the verb used is singular: "is" dead, not "are" dead. This confounds grammar, as Reason, itself, is going to be confounded in what follows.

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So they loued as loue in twaine,
Had the essence but in one,
Two distincts, Diuision none,
Number there in loue was slaine.

They loved as do two people who love one another, and yet they were not two but one, and one is not a number. For this duality the same questions arise as in the Doctrine of the Trinity.

Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
Distance and no space was seene,
Twixt this *Turtle* and his *Queene:*
But in them it were a wonder.

But in them it were a wonder: in any others than "this concordant one" all this would be "a wonder"; not so here.

So betweene them loue did shine,
That the *Turtle* saw his right,
Flaming in the *Phoenix* sight;
Either was the others mine.

The Phoenix' eyes are traditionally of fire; they flame like the sun. But, more than that, the Turtle sees *his right* flaming in them.

His right: all he can ask or be entitled to; all that is due and just; all that he truly is, his true being.

Let me quote a few lines here from *The Birds Parliament* by Attar, the twelfth century Persian saint and mystic, also about the Phoenix, which in Attar's poem is the leader in the soul's return to God. The poem is translated by Edward Fitzgerald, who translated Omar Khayyám.

Once more they ventured from the Dust to raise
Their eyes up to the Throne, into the Blaze;
And in the Centre of the Glory there
Beheld the Figure of THEMSELVES, as 'twere
Transfigured—looking to Themselves, beheld
The Figure on the Throne enmiracled,
Until their Eyes themselves and that between
Did hesitate which SEER was, which SEEN.

Or as in Shelley's lines from his "Hymn of Apollo":

I am the Eye with which the universe
Beholds itself and knows itself divine.

Either was the others mine: diamond mine, ruby mine, yes, perhaps; but, more important, each entirely possessed and was possessed by the other.

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Propertie was thus appalled,
That the selfe was not the same:
Single Natures double name,
Neither two nor one was called.

Reason in it selfe confounded,
Saw Diuision grow together,
To themselves yet either neither,
Simple were so well compounded.

That it cried, how true a twaine,
Seemeth this concordant one,
Loue hath Reason, Reason none,
If what parts, can so remaine.

Any other poem, I sometimes think, would have made Reason cry

How true a one
Seemeth this concordant twain.

But the poem goes the further step, makes *Reason in it selfe confounded* speak in character and show itself to be confounded. Very Shakespearean, this dramatic actuality!

Whereupon it made this *Threne*
To the *Phoenix* and the *Doue*,
Co-supremes and starres of Loue,
As *Chorus* to their Tragique Scene.

Note that Reason is the singer

THRENOS

Beautie, Truth, and Raritie,
Grace in all simplicitie,
Here enclosde, in cinders lie.

Death is now the *Phoenix* nest,
And the *Turtles* loyall brest,
To eternitie doth rest,

To the Phoenix, death is now a nest, a symbol of rebirth, but to

the *Turtles* loyall brest,

it is a place of final repose.

Leauing no posteritie,
Twas not their infirmitie,
It was married Chastitie.

What these

Co-supremes and starres of Loue

have been concerned with has not been offspring. Besides, there can

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be but the one Phoenix, although in this poem, we may imagine, the sacrifice, the devotion of a Dove is needed for each new regeneration or reincarnation.

> The intellect of man is forced to choose
> Perfection of the life or of the work,

wrote W. B. Yeats. Must poets give up their lives so that poetry may be renewed?

> Truth may seeme, but cannot be,
> Beautie bragge, but tis not she,
> Truth and Beautie buried be.

As a poem may be something beyond anyone's reading or apprehension of it?

> To this vrne let those repaire,
> That are either true or faire,
> For these dead Birds, sigh a prayer.

This prayer is wordless; it is sighed only, not spoken. What it might have said is what the whole poem has been conveying, an endeavor to apprehend a mystery. And it is no good asking what this mystery is apart from this endeavor itself.

We may say if we like that this mystery is the mystery of being, which is forever dying into cinders and arising to flame and die anew; and always, perhaps, demanding a sacrifice of constancy for the sake of that to which it is loyal and true. But no remarks on this poem can be more than snapshots of something someone has thought he saw in it: helpful maybe to some but merely curiosities of opinion to others.

There are two remarks I would like, however, to make before inviting the reader to read the poem again straight through.

> Beautie, Truth, and Raritie.

The truth celebrated in the poem is chiefly loyalty, faithfulness, and constancy, which, as with Troilus, the true knight, the true lover, is truth spelled *Troth*. At first sight troth may not seem to have very much to do with the ways in which a statement in a science may be true (or false), or evidence offered in a law court may be true (or false), or philosophical or critical or historical or literary views may be true (or false). And yet, for all of these, if we search and imagine faithfully enough, we will find that the statement or opinion, whatever it is, hangs in the midst of and is dependent upon a vast

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network of loyalties toward everything that may be relevant. Its truth is a matter of inter-inanimations and co-operations among loyalties, among troths.

And very significant parallels to all this hold for beauty.

This poem, one may well think, is not about any such high and remote abstractions but about two people; two people, who may be thought to have been "the very personifications, the very embodiments," as we lightly say, of beauty and truth, though they are spoken of in the poem as two birds. That is how the poem feels, no doubt about it. But, as certainly, there is a religious quality in its movement, a feeling in it as though we were being related through it to something far beyond any individuals. This Phoenix and this Turtle have a mythic scale to them, as though through them we were to become participants in something ultimate. All this, however, is so handled that it seems as easy and as natural and as necessary as breathing.

Let us read the poem again with a wider and more relaxed attention. Was it Mr. Eliot who remarked: "There is such a thing as page fright as well as stage fright"? The very greatness of a poem can stupefy the reader.

. . . . . .

To this vrne let those repaire . . .

No one who repairs to this urn will think there can be any end to wondering about it.

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The Representation of Nature in Contemporary Physics*

WERNER HEISENBERG

THE PROBLEMS of modern art, so frequently and passionately discussed in our time, force us to examine those foundations which form the presupposition for every development of art, foundations which at other times are taken as self-evident. Indeed, the question has been raised whether the relation of modern man toward nature differs so fundamentally from that of former times that this difference alone is responsible for a completely different point of departure for the fine arts in contemporary culture. Certainly the relation of our period toward nature hardly finds its expression, as it did in earlier centuries, in a developed natural philosophy; rather, it is determined mainly by modern science and technology.

For this reason it is worthwhile to consider the view of nature held by modern science, and in particular by contemporary physics. From the start, however, a reservation must be made: there is little ground for believing that the current world view of science has directly influenced the development of modern art or could have done so. Yet we may believe that the changes in the foundations of modern science are an indication of profound transformations in the fundamentals of our existence, which on their part certainly have their effects in all areas of human experience. From this point of view it may be valuable for the artist to consider what changes have occurred during the last decade in the scientific view of nature.

I

First, let us consider the historical roots of recent science. When this science was being established in the seventeenth century by Kepler, Galileo, and Newton, the medieval image was at first still unbroken: man saw in nature God's creation. Nature was thought of as the work of God. It would have seemed senseless to people of

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that time to ask about the material world apart from its dependence on God. The words with which Kepler concluded the last volume of his *Harmony of the World* may be cited as a document of that era:

> I thank thee, O Lord, our Creator, that thou hast permitted me to look at the beauty in thy work of creation; I exult in the works of thy hands. See, I have here completed the work to which I felt called; I have earned interest from the talent that thou hast given me. I have proclaimed the glory of thy works to the people who will read these demonstrations, to the extent that the limitations of my spirit would allow.

In the course of a few decades, however, this relation of man toward nature altered fundamentally. As the scientist immersed himself in the details of natural processes, he recognized that it was in fact possible, following Galileo's example, to separate out individual processes of nature from their environment, describe them mathematically, and thus "explain" them. At the same time, it certainly became clear to him what an endless task was thus presented to the infant science. Newton could no longer see the world as the work of God, comprehensible only as a whole. His position toward nature is most clearly circumscribed by his well-known statement that he felt like a child playing at the seashore, happy whenever he found a smoother pebble or a more beautiful sea shell than usual, while the great ocean of truth lay unexplored before him. This transformation in the attitude of the scientist toward nature may perhaps be better understood when we consider that, to some Christian thought of the period, God in heaven seemed so far removed from earth that it became meaningful to view the earth apart from God. Thus there may even be justification in speaking of a specifically Christian form of godlessness in connection with modern science. This would explain why such a development has not taken place in other cultures. It is certainly no coincidence that precisely in that period, nature becomes the object of representation in the arts independent of religious themes. The same tendency comes to expression in science when nature is considered not only independent of God, but also independent of man, so that there is formed the ideal of an "objective" description or explanation of nature. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that for Newton the sea shell is significant only because it comes from the great ocean of truth. Observing it is not yet an end in itself; rather, its study receives meaning through its relation to the whole.

In the subsequent era, the method of Newton's mechanics was

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successfully applied to ever wider realms of nature. This period attempted to separate out details of nature by means of experiments, to observe them objectively, and to understand the laws underlying them. It attempted to formulate interrelations mathematically and thus to arrive at "laws" that hold without qualification throughout the cosmos. By this path it finally succeeded in making the forces of nature serve our purposes through technology. The magnificent development of mechanics in the eighteenth century and of optics, heat theory, and heat technology in the nineteenth century bears witness to the power of this innovation.

In proportion to the success of this kind of science, it spread beyond the realm of daily experience into remote regions of nature that could only be disclosed with the aid of technology, which developed in conjunction with science. Newton's decisive realization was that the laws which govern the fall of a stone also determine the orbit of the moon around the earth and thus are applicable in cosmic dimensions also. In the years that followed, natural science began its victory march on a broad front into those remote regions of nature about which we may obtain information only by the detour of technology—that is, by using more or less complicated apparatus. Astronomy used the improved telescope to master ever more remote cosmic regions. Chemistry attempted to understand processes at the atomic level from the behavior of substances in chemical reactions. Experiments with the induction machine and the Voltaic pile gave the first insight into electrical phenomena that were still hidden from the daily life of that era. Thus the meaning of the word "nature" as an object of scientific research slowly changed; it became a collective concept for all those areas of experience into which man can penetrate through science and technology, whether or not they are given to him "naturally" in direct experience. The term *description* of nature also progressively lost its original significance as a representation intended to convey the most alive and imaginable picture possible of nature; instead, in increasing measure a mathematical description of nature was implied—that is, a collection of data concerning interrelations according to law in nature, precise and brief yet also as comprehensive as possible.

The expansion of the concept of nature that had half unconsciously been completed in this development did not yet have to be considered as a fundamental departure from the original aims of science; the decisive basic concepts were still the same for the ex-

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panded area of experience and for the original direct experience of nature. To the nineteenth century, nature appeared as a lawful process in space and time, in whose description it was possible to ignore as far as axioms were concerned, even if not in practice, both man and his interference in nature.

The permanent in the flux of phenomena was taken to be matter unchangeable in mass and capable of being moved by forces. Since chemical phenomena from the eighteenth century on had been successfully organized and interpreted through the atomistic hypothesis taken over from antiquity, it seemed plausible to consider the atoms, in the sense of classical natural philosophy, as the truly real, as the unchangeable building stones of matter. As in the philosophy of Democritus, sensual qualities of matter were taken as appearance; smell and color, temperature and toughness were not intrinsic properties of matter, but originated as interactions between matter and our senses and thus had to be explained through the arrangement and motion of the atoms and the effects of this arrangement on our senses. In this way the all-too-simple world view of nineteenth century materialism was formed: the atoms, as intrinsically unchangeable beings, move in space and time and, through their mutual arrangement and motion, call forth the colorful phenomena of our sense world.

A first inroad into this simple world picture, though one not too dangerous, occurred in the second half of the last century through the development of electrical theory in which not matter but rather the force field had to be taken as the intrinsically real. Interactions between fields of force without a substance as carrier of the forces were less easily understandable than the materialistic conception of reality in atomic physics. An element of abstraction and lack of visualizability was brought into the otherwise apparently so obvious world view. That is why there was no dearth of attempts to return to the simple conception of matter in materialistic philosophy through the detour of a material ether that would carry these fields of force as elastic tensions. Such atttempts, however, never quite managed to succeed. Nevertheless it was possible to be consoled by the fact that changes in fields of force could be considered as occurrences in space and time, describable objectively—that is, without consideration of the means of observation. Thus they corresponded to the generally accepted ideal of a process operating according to law in space and time. It was further possible to think

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of the force fields, since they can only be observed through their interaction with atoms, as called forth by the atoms, and thus to use them in a certain sense only in explaining the motions of atoms. To that extent, the atoms remained after all the intrinsically real; between them was empty space, which at most possessed a certain kind of reality as carrier of the force fields and of geometry.

For this world view it was not too significant that after the discovery of radioactivity near the end of the last century, the atoms of chemistry could no longer be taken as the final indivisible building blocks of matter but were themselves found to be composed of three types of basic building blocks, which we today call protons, neutrons, and electrons. This realization led in its practical consequences to the transmutation of the elements and to nuclear technology, and thus became tremendously important. As far as fundamental questions are concerned, however, nothing has changed now that we have recognized protons, neutrons, and electrons as the smallest building blocks of matter and interpret these as the intrinsically real. For the materialistic world view, it is important only that the possibility remains of taking these smallest constituents of the atoms as the final objective reality. On this foundation rested the coherent world view of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Because of its simplicity it preserved for several decades its full powers of persuasion.

Precisely at this point profound changes in the foundations of atomic physics occurred in our century which lead away from the reality concept of classical atomism. It has turned out that the hoped-for objective reality of the elementary particles represents too rough a simplification of the true state of affairs and must yield to much more abstract conceptions. When we wish to picture to ourselves the nature of the existence of the elementary particles, we may no longer ignore the physical processes by which we obtain information about them. When we are observing objects of our daily experience, the physical process transmitting the observation of course plays only a secondary role. However, for the smallest building blocks of matter every process of observation causes a major disturbance; it turns out that we can no longer talk of the behavior of the particle apart from the process of observation. In consequence, we are finally led to believe that the laws of nature which we formulate mathematically in quantum theory deal no longer with the particles themselves but with our knowledge of the elementary

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particles. The question whether these particles exist in space and time "in themselves" can thus no longer be posed in this form. We can only talk about the processes that occur when, through the interaction of the particle with some other physical system such as a measuring instrument, the behavior of the particle is to be disclosed. The conception of the objective reality of the elementary particles has thus evaporated in a curious way, not into the fog of some new, obscure, or not yet understood reality concept, but into the transparent clarity of a mathematics that represents no longer the behavior of the elementary particles but rather our knowledge of this behavior. The atomic physicist has had to come to terms with the fact that his science is only a link in the endless chain of discussions of man with nature, but that it cannot simply talk of nature "as such." Natural science always presupposes man, and we must become aware of the fact that, as Bohr has expressed it, we are not only spectators but also always participants on the stage of life.

II

Before we can speak of the general implications arising out of this new situation in modern physics, it is necessary to discuss a development which is more important for practical purposes, namely the expansion of technology which has proceeded hand in hand with the growth of science. This technology has carried natural science from its origin in the West over the face of the earth and helped it to a central position in the thought of our time. In this process of development during the last two hundred years technology has always been both presupposition and consequence of natural science. It is presupposition because an extension and deepening of science often can take place only through a refinement of the means of observation. The invention of the telescope and microscope and the discovery of X-rays are examples. Technology, on the other hand, is also a consequence of science, since the technical exploitation of the forces of nature is in general only possible on the basis of a thorough knowledge of the natural laws of that particular realm of science.

Thus in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there first developed a technology based on the utilization of mechanical processes. The machine at that stage often only imitated the actions of man's hand, whether in spinning and weaving or in the lifting

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of loads or the forging of large pieces of iron. Hence this form of technology was initially seen as an extension of the old crafts. It was understandable and obvious to the onlooker in the same way as the work of the craftsman, whose fundamental principles everyone knew even if the detailed techniques could not be copied by all. Even the introduction of the steam engine did not fundamentally change this character of technology; however, from this time on the expansion of technology could progress at a formerly unknown rate, for it now became possible to place the natural forces stored in coal in the service of man to perform his manual work for him.

A decisive transformation in the character of technology probably began with the technical utilization of electricity in the second half of the last century. It was hardly possible to speak any longer of a direct connection with the earlier crafts. Natural forces were now exploited that were almost unknown to people in direct experience of nature. For many people, even today, electricity has something uncanny about it; at the least it is often considered incomprehensible, though it is all around us. The high-voltage lines which one must not approach admittedly give us a kind of conceptual lesson concerning the force field employed by science, but basically this realm of nature remains foreign to us. Viewing the interior of a complicated electrical apparatus is sometimes unpleasant in the same way as watching a surgical operation.

Chemical technology also might be seen as a continuation of old crafts such as dyeing, tanning, and pharmacy. But here also the extent of the newly developed chemical technology from about the turn of the century no longer permits comparison with the earlier circumstances. Nuclear technology, finally, is concerned with the exploitation of natural forces to which every approach from the world of natural experience is lacking. Perhaps this technology, too, in the end will become as familiar to modern man as electricity, without which man can no longer conceive his environment. But the things that are daily around us do not for that reason become a part of nature in the original sense of the word. Perhaps, in the future, the many pieces of technical apparatus will as inescapably belong to man as the snail's house to the snail or the web to the spider. Even then, however, these machines would be more parts of our human organism than parts of surrounding nature.

Technology thus fundamentally interferes with the relation of nature to man, in that it transforms his environment in large measure

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and thereby incessantly and inescapably holds the scientific aspect of the world before his eyes. The claim of science to be capable of reaching out into the whole cosmos with a method that always separates and clarifies individual phenomena, and thus goes forward from relationship to relationship, is mirrored in technology which step by step penetrates new realms, transforms our environment before our eyes, and impresses our image upon it. In the same sense in which every detailed question in science is subordinate to the major task of understanding nature as a whole, so also does the smallest technical advance serve the general goal, that of enlarging the material power of man. The value of this goal is as little questioned as the value of natural knowledge in science, and the two aims coalesce in the banal slogan "Knowledge is Power." Probably it is possible to demonstrate in the case of every technical process its subservience to this common goal; it is, on the other hand, characteristic for the whole development that the individual technical process is bound to the common goal in such an indirect way that one can hardly view it as part of a conscious plan for the accomplishment of this goal. Technology almost ceases to appear at such times as the product of conscious human effort for the spreading of material power. Instead it appears as a biological process on a large scale, in which the structures that are part of the human organism are transferred in ever larger measure to man's environment. Such a biological process would be outside man's control, for man can indeed do what he wills, but he cannot will what he wills.

III

It has often been said that the profound changes in our environment and our way of life in the technical age have also transformed our thinking in a dangerous way. Here, we are told, is the root of the crises by which our era is shaken—and by which modern art is shaped. But this objection is older than the technology and science of our time; technology and machines in a more primitive form have existed in much earlier times, so that men were forced to think about such questions in periods long past. Two and a half thousand years ago, the Chinese sage Chang Tsi spoke of the dangers to man of using machines. I would like to quote a section from his writings that is important for our subject:

When Tsi Gung came into the region north of the river Han, he saw an old man busy in his vegetable garden. He had dug ditches for watering.

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He himself climbed into the well, brought up a container full of water in his arms, and emptied it. He exerted himself to the utmost, but achieved very little.

Tsi Gung spoke: "There is an arrangement with which it is possible to fill a hundred ditches with water every day. With little effort much is accomplished. Wouldn't you like to use it?" The gardener rose up, looked at him and said, "What would that be?"

Tsi Gung said, "A lever is used, weighted at one end and light at the other. In this way water can be drawn, so that it gushes out. It is known as a draw-well."

At that, anger rose up in the face of the old man and he laughed, saying, "I have heard my teacher say: 'When a man uses a machine he carries on all his business in a machine-like manner. Whoever does his business in the manner of a machine develops a machine heart. Whoever has a machine heart in his breast loses his simplicity. Whoever loses his simplicity becomes uncertain in the impulses of his spirit. Uncertainty in the impulses of the spirit is something that is incompatible with truth.' Not that I am unfamiliar with such devices; I am ashamed to use them."

That this ancient tale contains a considerable amount of truth, everyone of us will agree; "uncertainty in the impulses of the spirit" is perhaps one of the most telling descriptions we can give to the condition of man in the present crisis. Nevertheless, although technology, the machine, has spread over the world to an extent that the Chinese sage could not have imagined, two thousand years later the world's finest works of art are still being created and the simplicity of the soul of which the philosopher spoke has never been completely lost. Instead, in the course of the centuries it has shown itself, sometimes weakly, sometimes powerfully, and it has borne fruit again and again. Finally, the ascent of man has, after all, occurred through the development of tools; thus technology cannot carry the whole blame for the fact that the consciousness of this interconnection has in many places been lost.

Perhaps we will come nearer the truth if the sudden and—measured by earlier changes—unusually swift diffusion of technology in the last fifty years is held responsible for the many difficulties. The speed of technological transformation, in contrast to that of earlier centuries, leaves no time to mankind in which to adjust to the new conditions of life. But even this is probably not the correct or the complete explanation of why our time seems to face a new situation, hardly without analogy in history.

We have already mentioned that the changes in the foundations of modern science may perhaps be viewed as symptoms of shifts in

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the fundamentals of our existence which then express themselves simultaneously in many places, be it in changes in our way of life or our usual thought forms, be it in external catastrophes, wars, or revolutions. When one attempts to grope one's way from the situation in modern science to the fundamentals that have begun to shift, one has the impression that it is not too crude a simplification of the state of affairs to assert that for the first time in the course of history man on earth faces only himself, that he finds no longer any other partner or foe. This observation applies first of all in a commonplace way in the battle of man against outward dangers. In earlier times he was endangered by wild animals, disease, hunger, cold, and other forces of nature, and in this strife every extension of technology represented a strengthening of his position and therefore progress. In our time, when the earth is becoming ever more densely settled, the narrowing of the possibilities of life and thus the threat to man's existence originates above all from other people, who also assert their claim to the goods of the earth. In such a confrontation, the extension of technology need no longer be an indication of progress.

The statement that in our time man confronts only himself is valid in the age of technology in a still wider sense. In earlier epochs man saw himself opposite nature. Nature, in which dwelt all sorts of living beings, was a realm existing according to its own laws, and into it man somehow had to fit himself. We, on the other hand, live in a world so completely transformed by man that, whether we are using the machines of our daily life, taking food prepared by machines, or striding through landscapes transformed by man, we invariably encounter structures created by man, so that in a sense we always meet only ourselves. Certainly there are parts of the earth where this process is nowhere near completion, but sooner or later the dominion of man in this respect will be complete.

This new situation becomes most obvious to us in science, in which it turns out, as I have described earlier, that we can no longer view "in themselves" the building blocks of matter which were originally thought of as the last objective reality; that they refuse to be fixed in any way in space and time; and that basically we can only make our knowledge of these particles the object of science. The aim of research is thus no longer knowledge of the atoms and their motion "in themselves," separated from our experimental questioning; rather, right from the beginning, we stand in the center of the confrontation between nature and man, of which science, of course, is only a part. The familiar classification of the world into subject and

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object, inner and outer world, body and soul, somehow no longer quite applies, and indeed leads to difficulties. In science, also, the object of research is no longer nature in itself but rather nature exposed to man's questioning, and to this extent man here also meets himself.

Our time has clearly been given the task of coming to terms with this new situation in all aspects of life, and only when this is accomplished will man be able to regain that " certainty in the impulses of the spirit " talked of by the Chinese sage. The way to this goal will be long and arduous, and we do not know what stations of the cross are still ahead. But if indications are sought as to the nature of the way, it may be permissible to consider once more the example of the exact sciences.

In quantum theory, we accepted the described situation when it became possible to represent it mathematically and when, therefore, in every case we could say clearly and without danger of logical contradiction how the result of an experiment would turn out. We thus resigned ourselves to the new situation the moment the ambiguities were removed. The mathematical formulas indeed no longer portray nature, but rather our knowledge of nature. Thus we have renounced a form of natural description that was familiar for centuries and still was taken as the obvious goal of all exact science even a few decades ago. It could also be said for the present that we have accepted the situation in the realm of modern atomic physics only because our experience can in fact be correctly represented in that area. As soon as we look at the philosophical interpretations of quantum theory, we find that opinions still differ widely; the view is occasionally heard that this new form of natural description is not yet satisfying since it does not correspond to the earlier ideal of scientific truth, and hence is to be taken only as another symptom of the crisis of our time, and in any case is not the final formulation.

It will be useful to discuss in this connection the concept of scientific truth in somewhat more general terms and to ask for criteria as to when an item of scientific knowledge can be called consistent and final. For the moment, a more external criterion: As long as any realm of the intellectual life is developing steadily and without inner break, specific detailed questions are presented to the individual working in this area, questions that are in a sense problems of technique, whose solution is certainly not an end in itself but appears valuable in the interest of the larger relationship that alone is important. These detailed problems are presented to us, they do not

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have to be sought, and working on them is the presupposition for collaborating at the larger relationship. In the same sense, medieval stone masons endeavored to copy as accurately as possible the folds of garments, and the solution of their special problem was necessary because the folds of the garments of the saints were part of the large religious relationship that was the real aim. In a similar way, special problems have always presented themselves in modern science, and work on these is the presupposition for the understanding of the large relationship. These questions presented themselves, also, in the development of the last fifty years; they did not have to be sought. And the aim was always the same: the large interrelatedness of the laws of nature. In this sense, purely from the outside, there seems to be no basis for any break in the continuity of exact science.

With respect to the finality of the results, however, we should remember that in the realm of exact science final solutions are continually being found for certain delimited areas of experience. The problems, for instance, which could be studied with the concepts of Newtonian mechanics found their final answer for all time through Newton's laws and the mathematical deductions drawn from them. These solutions, to be sure, do not extend beyond the concepts and questions of Newtonian mechanics. Thus electrical theory, for instance, was not accessible to analysis by these concepts. New systems of concepts emerged in the exploration of this new realm of experience with whose help the laws of electricity could be mathematically formulated in their final form. The word "final" in connection with exact science evidently means that we will always find closed, mathematically describable systems of concepts and laws that fit certain areas of experience, are valid in them anywhere in the universe, and are incapable of modification or improvement. It cannot, however, be expected that these concepts and laws will later be suitable for the representation of new realms of experience. Only in this limited sense, therefore, can the concepts and laws of quantum theory be designated as final, and only in this limited sense can it ever happen that scientific knowledge finds its final fixation in mathematical or any other language.

Similarly, certain philosophies of justice assume that justice always exists but that, in general, in every new legal case justice must be found anew, that at all events the written law always covers only limited areas of life and therefore cannot be everywhere binding. Exact science also goes forward in the belief that it will be possible in every new realm of experience to understand nature, but what

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the word "understand" might signify is not at all predetermined. The natural knowledge of earlier epochs, fixed in mathematical formulas, might be "final," but not in any sense always applicable. This state of affairs makes it impossible to base articles of belief that are to be binding for one's bearing in life on scientific knowledge alone. The establishment of such articles of faith could only be based on such "fixed" scientific knowledge, a knowledge only applicable to limited realms of experience. The assertion often found at the beginning of creeds originating in our time that they deal not with belief but with scientifically based knowledge, thus contains an inner contradiction and rests on a self-deception.

Nevertheless, this realization must not mislead us into underestimating the firmness of the ground on which the edifice of exact science has been built. The concept of scientific truth basic to natural science can bear many kinds of natural understanding. Not only the science of past centuries but also modern atomic physics is based on it. Hence it follows that one can come to terms with a knowledge situation in which an objectification of the process of nature is no longer possible, and that one should be able to find our relation to nature within it.

When we speak of a picture of nature provided by contemporary exact science, we do not actually mean any longer a picture of nature, but rather a picture of our relation to nature. The old compartmentalization of the world into an objective process in space and time, on the one hand, and the soul in which this process is mirrored, on the other—that is, the Cartesian differentiation of *res cogitans* and *res extensa*—is no longer suitable as the starting point for the understanding of modern science. In the field of view of this science there appears above all the network of relations between man and nature, of the connections through which we as physical beings are dependent parts of nature and at the same time, as human beings, make them the object of our thought and actions. Science no longer is in the position of observer of nature, but rather recognizes itself as part of the interplay between man and nature. The scientific method of separating, explaining, and arranging becomes conscious of its limits, set by the fact that the employment of this procedure changes and transforms its object; the procedure can no longer keep its distance from the object. The world view of natural science thus ceases to be a view of "natural" science in its proper sense.

The clarification of these paradoxes in a narrow segment of science has certainly not achieved much for the general situation of our time,

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in which, to repeat a simplification used earlier, we suddenly and above all confront ourselves. The hope that the extension of man's material and spiritual power always represents progress thus finds a limit, even though it may not yet be clearly visible. The dangers are the greater, the more violently the wave of optimism engendered by the belief in progress surges against this limit. Perhaps the nature of the danger here discussed can be made clearer by another metaphor. With the seemingly unlimited expansion of his material might, man finds himself in the position of a captain whose ship has been so securely built of iron and steel that the needle of his compass no longer points to the north, but only toward the ship's mass of iron. With such a ship no destination can be reached; it will move aimlessly and be subject in addition to winds and ocean currents. But let us remember the state of affairs of modern physics: the danger only exists so long as the captain is unaware that his compass does not respond to the earth's magnetic forces. The moment the situation is recognized, the danger can be considered as half removed. For the captain who does not want to travel in circles but desires to reach a known—or unknown—destination will find ways and means for determining the orientation of his ship. He may start using modern types of compasses that are not affected by the iron of the ship, or he may navigate, as in former times, by the stars. Of course we cannot decree the visibility or lack of visibility of the stars, and in our time perhaps they are only rarely visible. In any event, awareness that the hopes engendered by the belief in progress will meet a limit implies the wish not to travel in circles but to reach a goal. To the extent that we reach clarity about this limit, the limit itself may furnish the first firm hold by which we can orient ourselves anew.

Perhaps from this comparison with modern science we may draw hope that we may here be dealing with a limit for certain forms of expansion of human activity, not, however, with a limit to human activity as such. The space in which man as spiritual being is developing has more dimensions than the one within which he has moved forward in the preceding centuries. It follows that in the course of long stretches of time the conscious acceptance of this limit will perhaps lead to a certain stabilization in which the thoughts of men will again arrange themselves around a common center. Such a development may perhaps also supply a new foundation for the development of art; but to speak about that does not behoove the scientist.

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TEXTS AND MOTIFS

In the first of his great lectures on *Symbolism, Its Meaning and Effect*, A. N. Whitehead said:

> We must start from a formal definition of symbolism: The human mind is functioning symbolically when some components of its experience elicit consciousness, beliefs, emotions, and usages, respecting other components of its experience. The former set of components are the 'symbols,' and the latter set constitute the 'meaning' of the symbols. The organic functioning whereby there is transition from the symbol to the meaning will be called 'symbolic reference.'
>
> This symbolic reference is the active synthetic element contributed by the nature of the percipient. It requires a ground founded on some community between the natures of symbol and meaning. But such a common element in the two natures does not of itself necessitate symbolic reference, nor does it decide which shall be symbol and which shall be meaning, nor does it secure that the symbolic reference shall be immune from producing errors and disasters for the percipient. We must conceive perception in the light of a primary phase in the self-production of an occasion of actual existence.
>
> In defence of this notion of self-production arising out of some primary given phase, I would remind you that, apart from it, there can be no moral responsibility. The potter, and not the pot, is responsible for the shape of the pot. An actual occasion arises as the bringing together into one real context diverse perceptions, diverse feelings, diverse purposes, and other diverse activities arising out of those primary perceptions. Here activity is another name for self-production.

We reprint here his third lecture, "Uses of Symbolism," which Whitehead prefaced with the remark that symbolism

> plays a dominant part in the way in which all higher organisms conduct their lives. It is the cause of progress, and the cause of error. The higher animals have gained a faculty of great power, by means of which they can define with some accuracy those distant features in the immediate world by which their future lives are to be determined. But this faculty is not infallible; and the risks are commensurate with its importance. It is the purpose of the next chapter to illustrate this doctrine by an analysis of the part played by this habit of symbolism in promoting the cohesion, the progress, and the dissolution of human societies.

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A. N. Whitehead: "Uses of Symbolism"*

THE ATTITUDE of mankind towards symbolism exhibits an unstable mixture of attraction and repulsion. The practical intelligence, the theoretical desire to pierce to ultimate fact, and ironic critical impulses have contributed the chief motives towards the repulsion from symbolism. Hard-headed men want facts and not symbols. A clear theoretic intellect, with its generous enthusiasm for the exact truth at all costs and hazards, pushes aside symbols as being mere make-believes, veiling and distorting that inner sanctuary of simple truth which reason claims as its own. The ironic critics of the follies of humanity have performed notable service in clearing away the lumber of useless ceremony symbolizing the degrading fancies of a savage past. The repulsion from symbolism stands out as a well-marked element in the cultural history of civilized people. There can be no reasonable doubt but that this continuous criticism has performed a necessary service in the promotion of a wholesome civilization, both on the side of the practical efficiency of organized society, and on the side of a robust direction of thought.

No account of the uses of symbolism is complete without this recognition that the symbolic elements in life have a tendency to run wild, like the vegetation in a tropical forest. The life of humanity can easily be overwhelmed by its symbolic accessories. A continuous process of pruning, and of adaptation to a future ever requiring new forms of expression, is a necessary function in every society. The successful adaptation of old symbols to changes of social structure is the final mark of wisdom in sociological statesmanship. Also an occasional revolution in symbolism is required.

There is, however, a Latin proverb upon which, in our youth, some of us have been set to write themes. In English it reads thus:—Nature, expelled with a pitchfork, ever returns. This proverb is exemplified by the history of symbolism. However you may endeavour to expel it, it ever returns. Symbolism is no mere idle fancy or corrupt degeneration: it is inherent in the very texture of human life. Language itself is a symbolism. And, as another example, however you reduce the functions of your government to their utmost

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simplicity, yet symbolism remains. It may be a healthier, manlier ceremonial, suggesting finer notions. But still it is symbolism. You abolish the etiquette of a royal court, with its suggestions of personal subordination, but at official receptions you ceremonially shake the hand of the Governor of your State. Just as the feudal doctrine of a subordination of classes, reaching up to the ultimate overlord, requires its symbolism; so does the doctrine of human equality obtain its symbolism. Mankind, it seems, has to find a symbol in order to express itself. Indeed 'expression' is 'symbolism.'

When the public ceremonial of the State has been reduced to the barest simplicity, private clubs and associations at once commence to reconstitute symbolic actions. It seems as though mankind must always be masquerading. This imperative impulse suggests that the notion of an idle masquerade is the wrong way of thought about the symbolic elements in life. The function of these elements is to be definite, manageable, reproducible, and also to be charged with their own emotional efficacity: symbolic transference invests their correlative meanings with some or all of these attributes of the symbols, and thereby lifts the meanings into an intensity of definite effectiveness—as elements in knowledge, emotion, and purpose,—an effectiveness which the meanings may, or may not, deserve on their own account. The object of symbolism is the enhancement of the importance of what is symbolized.

In a discussion of instances of symbolism, our first difficulty is to discover exactly what is being symbolized. The symbols are specific enough, but it is often extremely difficult to analyse what lies beyond them, even though there is evidently some strong appeal beyond the mere ceremonial acts.

It seems probable that in any ceremonial which has lasted through many epochs, the symbolic interpretation, so far as we can obtain it, varies much more rapidly than does the actual ceremonial. Also in its flux a symbol will have different meanings for different people. At any epoch some people have the dominant mentality of the past, some of the present, others of the future, and others of the many problematic futures which will never dawn. For these various groups an old symbolism will have different shades of vague meaning.

In order to appreciate the necessary function of symbolism in the life of any society of human beings we must form some estimate of the binding and disruptive forces at work. There are many varieties of human society, each requiring its own particular investigation so

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far as details are concerned. We will fix attention on nations, occupying definite countries. Thus geographical unity is at once presupposed. Communities with geographical unity constitute the primary type of communities which we find in the world. Indeed the lower we go in the scale of being, the more necessary is geographical unity for that close interaction of individuals which constitutes society. Societies of the higher animals, of insects, of molecules, all possess geographical unity. A rock is nothing else than a society of molecules, indulging in every species of activity open to molecules. I draw attention to this lowly form of society in order to dispel the notion that social life is a peculiarity of the higher organisms. The contrary is the case. So far as survival value is concerned, a piece of rock, with its past history of some eight hundred millions of years, far outstrips the short span attained by any nation. The emergence of life is better conceived as a bid for freedom on the part of organisms, a bid for a certain independence of individuality with self-interests and activities not to be construed purely in terms of environmental obligations. The immediate effect of this emergence of sensitive individuality has been to reduce the term of life for societies from hundreds of millions of years to hundreds of years, or even to scores of years.

The emergence of living beings cannot be ascribed to the superior survival value either of the individuals, or of their societies. National life has to face the disruptive elements introduced by these extreme claims for individual idiosyncrasies. We require both the advantages of social preservation, and the contrary stimulus of the heterogeneity derived from freedom. The society is to run smoothly amidst the divergencies of its individuals. There is a revolt from the mere causal obligations laid upon individuals by the social character of the environment. This revolt first takes the form of blind emotional impulse; and later, in civilized societies, these impulses are criticized and deflected by reason. In any case, there are individual springs of action which escape from the obligations of social conformity. In order to replace this decay of secure instinctive response, various intricate forms of symbolic expression of the various purposes of social life have been introduced. The response to the symbol is almost automatic but not quite; the reference to the meaning is there, either for additional emotional support, or for criticism. But the reference is not so clear as to be imperative. The imperative instinctive conformation to the influence of the environment has been

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modified. Something has replaced it, which by its superficial character invites criticism, and by its habitual use generally escapes it. Such symbolism makes connected thought possible by expressing it, while at the same time it automatically directs action. In the place of the force of instinct which suppresses individuality, society has gained the efficacy of symbols, at once preservative of the commonweal and of the individual standpoint.

Among the particular kinds of symbolism which serve this purpose, we must place first Language. I do not mean language in its function of a bare indication of abstract ideas, or of particular actual things, but language clothed with its complete influence for the nation in question. In addition to its bare indication of meaning, words and phrases carry with them an enveloping suggestiveness and an emotional efficacy. This function of language depends on the way it has been used, on the proportionate familiarity of particular phrases, and on the emotional history associated with their meanings and thence derivatively transferred to the phrases themselves. If two nations speak the same language, this emotional efficacy of words and phrases will in general differ for the two. What is familiar for one nation will be strange for the other nation; what is charged with intimate associations for the one is comparatively empty for the other. For example, if the two nations are somewhat widely sundered, with a different fauna and flora, the nature-poetry of one nation will lack its complete directness of appeal to the other nation—compare Walt Whitman's phrase,

'The wide unconscious scenery of my land'

for an American, with Shakespeare's

'. . . this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,'

for an Englishman. Of course anyone, American or English, with the slightest sense for history and kinship, or with the slightest sympathetic imagination, can penetrate to the feelings conveyed by both phrases. But the direct first-hand intuition, derived from earliest childhood memories, is for the one nation that of continental width, and for the other nation that of the little island world. Now the love of the sheer geographical aspects of one's country, of its hills, its mountains, and its plains, of its trees, its flowers, its birds, and its whole nature-life, is no small element in that binding force which makes a nation. It is the function of language, working

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through literature and through the habitual phrases of early life, to foster this diffused feeling of the common possession of a treasure infinitely precious.

I must not be misunderstood to mean that this example has any unique importance. It is only one example of what can be illustrated in a hundred ways. Also language is not the only symbolism effective for this purpose. But in an especial manner, language binds a nation together by the common emotions which it elicits, and is yet the instrument whereby freedom of thought and of individual criticism finds its expression.

My main thesis is that a social system is kept together by the blind force of instinctive actions, and of instinctive emotions clustered around habits and prejudices. It is therefore not true that any advance in the scale of culture inevitably tends to the preservation of society. On the whole, the contrary is more often the case, and any survey of nature confirms this conclusion. A new element in life renders in many ways the operation of the old instincts unsuitable. But unexpressed instincts are unanalysed and blindly felt. Disruptive forces, introduced by a higher level of existence, are then warring in the dark against an invisible enemy. There is no foothold for the intervention of 'rational consideration'—to use Henry Osborn Taylor's admirable phrase. The symbolic expression of instinctive forces drags them out into the open: it differentiates them and delineates them. There is then opportunity for reason to effect, with comparative speed, what otherwise must be left to the slow operation of the centuries amid ruin and reconstruction. Mankind misses its opportunities, and its failures are a fair target for ironic criticism. But the fact that reason too often fails does not give fair ground for the hysterical conclusion that it never succeeds. Reason can be compared to the force of gravitation, the weakest of all natural forces, but in the end the creator of suns and of stellar systems:—those great societies of the Universe. Symbolic expression first preserves society by adding emotion to instinct, and secondly it affords a foothold for reason by its delineation of the particular instinct which it expresses. This doctrine of the disruptive tendency due to novelties, even those involving a rise to finer levels, is illustrated by the effect of Christianity on the stability of the Roman Empire. It is also illustrated by the three revolutions which secured liberty and equality for the world—namely the English revolutionary

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period of the seventeenth century, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution. England barely escaped a disruption of its social system; America was never in any such danger; France, where the entrance of novelty was most intense, did for a time experience this collapse. Edmund Burke, the Whig statesman of the eighteenth century, was the philosopher who was the approving prophet of the two earlier revolutions, and the denunciatory prophet of the French Revolution. A man of genius and a statesman, who has immediately observed two revolutions, and has meditated deeply on a third, deserves to be heard when he speaks on the forces which bind and disrupt societies. Unfortunately statesmen are swayed by the passions of the moment, and Burke shared this defect to the full, so as to be carried away by the reactionary passions aroused by the French Revolution. Thus the wisdom of his general conception of social forces is smothered by the wild unbalanced conclusions which he drew from them: his greatness is best shown by his attitude towards the American Revolution. His more general reflections are contained first, in his youthful work *A Vindication of Natural Society*, and secondly, in his *Reflections on the French Revolution*. The earlier work was meant ironically; but, as is often the case with genius, he prophesied unknowingly. This essay is practically written round the thesis that advances in the art of civilization are apt to be destructive of the social system. Burke conceived this conclusion to be a *reductio ad absurdum*. But it is the truth. The second work —a work which in its immediate effect was perhaps the most harmful ever written—directs attention to the importance of 'prejudice' as a binding social force. There again I hold that he was right in his premises and wrong in his conclusions.

Burke surveys the standing miracle of the existence of an organised society, culminating in the smooth unified action of the state. Such a society may consist of millions of individuals, each with its individual character, its individual aims, and its individual selfishness. He asks what is the force which leads this throng of separate units to coöperate in the maintenance of an organised state, in which each individual has his part to play—political, economic, and æsthetic. He contrasts the complexity of the functionings of a civilised society with the sheer diversities of its individual citizens considered as a mere group or crowd. His answer to the riddle is that the magnetic force is 'prejudice,' or in other words, 'use and

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wont.' Here he anticipates the whole modern theory of 'herd psychology,' and at the same time deserts the fundamental doctrine of the Whig party, as formed in the seventeenth century and sanctioned by Locke. This conventional Whig doctrine was that the state derived its origin from an 'original contract' whereby the mere crowd voluntarily organised itself into a society. Such a doctrine seeks the origin of the state in a baseless historical fiction. Burke was well ahead of his time in drawing attention to the importance of precedence as a political force. Unfortunately, in the excitement of the moment, Burke construed the importance of precedence as implying the negation of progressive reform.

Now, when we examine how a society bends its individual members to function in conformity with its needs, we discover that one important operative agency is our vast system of inherited symbolism. There is an intricate expressed symbolism of language and of act, which is spread throughout the community, and which evokes fluctuating apprehension of the basis of common purposes. The particular direction of individual action is directly correlated to the particular sharply defined symbols presented to him at the moment. The response of action to symbol may be so direct as to cut out any effective reference to the ultimate thing symbolized. This elimination of meaning is termed reflex action. Sometimes there does intervene some effective reference to the meaning of the symbol. But this meaning is not recalled with the particularity and definiteness which would yield any rational enlightenment as to the specific action required to secure the final end. The meaning is vague but insistent. Its insistence plays the part of hypnotizing the individual to complete the specific action associated with the symbol. In the whole transaction, the elements which are clear-cut and definite are the specific symbols and the actions which should issue from the symbols. But in themselves the symbols are barren facts whose direct associative force would be insufficient to procure automatic conformity. There is not sufficient repetition, or sufficient similarity of diverse occasions, to secure mere automatic obedience. But in fact the symbol evokes loyalties to vaguely conceived notions, fundamental for our spiritual natures. The result is that our natures are stirred to suspend all antagonistic impulses, so that the symbol procures its required response in action. Thus the social symbolism has a double meaning. It means pragmatically the direction of

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individuals to specific action; and it also means theoretically the vague ultimate reasons with their emotional accompaniments, whereby the symbols acquire their power to organize the miscellaneous crowd into a smoothly running community.

The contrast between a state and an army illustrates this principle. A state deals with a greater complexity of situation than does its army. In this sense it is a looser organisation, and in regard to the greater part of its population the communal symbolism cannot rely for its effectiveness on the frequent recurrence of almost identical situations. But a disciplined regiment is trained to act as a unit in a definite set of situations. The bulk of human life escapes from the reach of this military discipline. The regiment is drilled for one species of job. The result is that there is more reliance on automatism, and less reliance on the appeal to ultimate reasons. The trained soldier acts automatically on receiving the word of command. He responds to the sound and cuts out the idea; this is reflex action. But the appeal to the deeper side is still important in an army; although it is provided for in another set of symbols, such as the flag, and the memorials of the honourable service of the regiment, and other symbolic appeals to patriotism. Thus in an army there is one set of symbols to produce automatic obedience in a limited set of circumstances, and there is another set of symbols to produce a general sense of the importance of the duties performed. This second set prevents random reflection from sapping automatic response to the former set.

For the greater number of citizens of a state there is in practice no reliable automatic obedience to any symbol such as the word of command for soldiers, except in a few instances such as the response to the signals of the traffic police. Thus the state depends in a very particular way upon the prevalence of symbols which combine direction to some well-known course of action with some deeper reference to the purpose of the state. The self-organisation of society depends on commonly diffused symbols evoking commonly diffused ideas, and at the same time indicating commonly understood actions. Usual forms of verbal expression are the most important example of such symbolism. Also the heroic aspect of the history of the country is the symbol for its immediate worth.

When a revolution has sufficiently destroyed this common symbolism leading to common actions for usual purposes, society can

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only save itself from dissolution by means of a reign of terror. Those revolutions which escape a reign of terror have left intact the fundamental efficient symbolism of society. For example, the English revolutions of the seventeenth century and the American revolution of the eighteenth century left the ordinary life of their respective communities nearly unchanged. When George Washington had replaced George III, and Congress had replaced the English Parliament, Americans were still carrying on a well-understood system so far as the general structure of their social life was concerned. Life in Virginia must have assumed no very different aspect from that which it had exhibited before the revolution. In Burke's phraseology, the prejudices on which Virginian society depended were unbroken. The ordinary signs still beckoned people to their ordinary actions, and suggested the ordinary common-sense justification.

One difficulty of explaining my meaning is that the intimate effective symbolism consists of the various types of expression which permeate society and evoke a sense of common purpose. No one detail is of much importance. The whole range of symbolic expression is required. A national hero, such as George Washington or Jefferson, is a symbol of the common purpose which animates American life. This symbolic function of great men is one of the difficulties in obtaining a balanced historical judgment. There is the hysteria of depreciation, and there is the opposite hysteria which dehumanises in order to exalt. It is very difficult to exhibit the greatness without losing the human being. Yet we know that at least *we* are human beings; and half the inspiration of our heroes is lost when we forget that *they* were human beings.

I mention great Americans, because I am speaking in America. But exactly the same truth holds for the great men of all countries and ages.

The doctrine of symbolism developed in these lectures enables us to distinguish between pure instinctive action, reflex action, and symbolically conditioned action. Pure instinctive action is that functioning of an organism which is wholly analysable in terms of those conditions laid upon its development by the settled facts of its external environment, conditions describable without any reference to its perceptive mode of presentational immediacy. This pure instinct is the response of an organism to pure causal efficacy.

According to this definition, pure instinct is the most primitive

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type of response which is yielded by organisms to the stimulus of their environment. All physical response on the part of inorganic matter to its environment is thus properly to be termed instinct. In the case of organic matter, its primary difference from inorganic nature is its greater delicacy of internal mutual adjustment of minute parts and, in some cases, its emotional enhancement. Thus instinct, or this immediate adjustment to immediate environment, becomes more prominent in its function of directing action for the purposes of the living organism. The world is a community of organisms; these organisms in the mass determine the environmental influence on any one of them; there can only be a persistent community of persistent organisms when the environmental influence in the shape of instinct is favourable to the survival of the individuals. Thus *the community as an environment is responsible for the survival* of the separate individuals which compose it; and these separate individuals are responsible for their contributions to the environment. Electrons and molecules survive because they satisfy this primary law for a stable order of nature in connection with given societies of organisms.

Reflex action is a relapse towards a more complex type of instinct on the part of organisms which enjoy, or have enjoyed, symbolically conditioned action. Thus its discussion must be postponed. Symbolically conditioned action arises in the higher organisms which enjoy the perceptive mode of presentational immediacy, that is to say, sense-presentation of the contemporary world. This sense-presentation symbolically promotes an analysis of the massive perception of causal efficacy. The causal efficacy is thereby perceived as analysed into components with the locations in space primarily belonging to the sense-presentations. In the case of perceived organisms external to the human body, the spatial discrimination involved in the human perception of their pure causal efficacy is so feeble, that practically there is no check on this symbolic transference, apart from the indirect check of pragmatic consequences,—in other words, either survival-value, or self-satisfaction, logical and æsthetic.

Symbolically conditioned action is action which is thus conditioned by the analysis of the perceptive mode of causal efficacy effected by symbolic transference from the perceptive mode of presentational immediacy. This analysis may be right or wrong, according as it does, or does not, conform to the actual distribution of the efficacious

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bodies. In so far as it is sufficiently correct under normal circumstances, it enables an organism to conform its actions to long-ranged analysis of the particular circumstances of its environment. So far as this type of action prevails, pure instinct is superseded. This type of action is greatly promoted by thought, which uses the symbols as referent to their meanings. There is no sense in which pure instinct can be wrong. But symbolically conditioned action can be wrong, in the sense that it may rise from a false symbolic analysis of causal efficacy.

Reflex action is that organic functioning which is wholly dependent on sense-presentation, unaccompanied by any analysis of causal efficacy *via* symbolic reference. The conscious analysis of perception is primarily concerned with the analysis of the symbolic relationship between the two perceptive modes. Thus reflex action is hindered by thought, which inevitably promotes the prominence of symbolic reference.

Reflex action arises when by the operation of symbolism the organism has acquired the habit of action in response to immediate sense-perception, and has discarded the symbolic enhancement of causal efficacy. It thus represents the relapse from the high-grade activity of symbolic reference. This relapse is practically inevitable in the absence of conscious attention. Reflex action cannot in any sense be said to be wrong, though it may be unfortunate.

Thus the important binding factor in a community of insects probably falls under the notion of pure instinct, as here defined. For each individual insect is probably such an organism that the causal conditions which it inherits from the immediate past are adequate to determine its social actions. But reflex action plays its subordinate part. For the sense-perceptions of the insects have in certain fields of action assumed an automatic determination of the insects' activities. Still more feebly, symbolically conditioned action intervenes for such situations when the sense-presentation provides a symbolically defined specification of the causal situation. But only active thought can save symbolically conditioned action from quickly relapsing into reflex action. The most successful examples of community life exist when pure instinct reigns supreme. These examples occur only in the inorganic world; among societies of active molecules forming rocks, planets, solar systems, star clusters.

The more developed type of living communities requires the successful emergence of sense-perception to delineate successfully

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causal efficacy in the external environment; and it also requires its relapse into a reflex suitable to the community. We thus obtain the more flexible communities of low-grade minds, or even living cells, which possess some power of adaptation to the chance details of remote environment.

Finally mankind also uses a more artificial symbolism, obtained chiefly by concentrating on a certain selection of sense-perceptions, such as words for example. In this case, there is a chain of derivations of symbol from symbol whereby finally the local relations, between the final symbol and the ultimate meaning, are entirely lost. Thus these derivative symbols, obtained as it were by arbitrary association, are really the results of reflex action suppressing the intermediate portions of the chain. We may use the word 'association' when there is this suppression of intermediate links.

This derivative symbolism, employed by mankind, is not in general mere indication of meaning, in which every common feature shared by symbol and meaning has been lost. In every effective symbolism there are certain æsthetic features shared in common. The meaning acquires emotion and feeling directly excited by the symbol. This is the whole basis of the art of literature, namely that emotions and feelings directly excited by the words should fitly intensify our emotions and feelings arising from contemplation of the meaning. Further in language there is a certain vagueness of symbolism. A word has a symbolic association with its own history, its other meanings, and with its general status in current literature. Thus a word gathers emotional signification from its emotional history in the past; and this is transferred symbolically to its meaning in present use.

The same principle holds for all the more artificial sorts of human symbolism:—for example, in religious art. Music is particularly adapted for this symbolic transfer of emotions, by reason of the strong emotions which it generates on its own account. These strong emotions at once overpower any sense that its own local relations are of any importance. The only importance of the local arrangement of an orchestra is to enable us to hear the music. We do not listen to the music in order to gain a just appreciation of how the orchestra is situated. When we hear the hoot of a motor car, exactly the converse situation arises. Our only interest in the hoot is to determine a definite locality as the seat of causal efficacy determining the future.

This consideration of the symbolic transference of emotion raises another question. In the case of sense-perception, we may ask

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whether the æsthetic emotion associated with it is derivative from it or merely concurrent with it. For example, the sound waves by their causal efficacy may produce in the body a state of pleasurable æsthetic emotion, which is then symbolically transferred to the sense-perception of the sounds. In the case of music, having regard to the fact that deaf people do not enjoy music, it seems that the emotion is almost entirely the product of the musical sounds. But the human body is causally affected by the ultra-violet rays of the solar spectrum in ways which do not issue in any sensation of colour. Nevertheless such rays produce a decided emotional effect. Also even sounds, just below or just above the limit of audibility, seem to add an emotional tinge to a volume of audible sound. This whole question of the symbolic transfer of emotion lies at the base of any theory of the æsthetics of art. For example, it gives the reason for the importance of a rigid suppression of irrelevant detail. For emotions inhibit each other, or intensify each other. Harmonious emotion means a complex of emotions mutually intensifying; whereas the irrelevant details supply emotions which, because of their irrelevance, inhibit the main effect. Each little emotion directly arising out of some subordinate detail refuses to accept its status as a detached fact in our consciousness. It insists on its symbolic transfer to the unity of the main effect.

Thus symbolism, including the symbolic transference by which it is effected, is merely one exemplification of the fact that a unity of experience arises out of the confluence of many components. This unity of experience is complex, so as to be capable of analysis. The components of experience are not a structureless collection indiscriminately brought together. Each component by its very nature stands in a certain potential scheme of relationships to the other components. It is the transformation of this potentiality into real unity which constitutes that actual concrete fact which is an act of experience. But in transformation from potentiality to actual fact inhibitions, intensifications, directions of attention toward, directions of attention away from, emotional outcomes, purposes, and other elements of experience may arise. Such elements are also true components of the act of experience; but they are not necessarily determined by the primitive phases of experience from which the final product arises. An act of experience is what a complex organism comes to, in its character of being one thing. Also its various parts, its molecules, and its living cells, as they pass on to new occasions

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of their existence, take a new colour from the fact that in their immediate past they have been contributory elements to this dominant unity of experience, which in its turn reacts upon them.

Thus mankind by means of its elaborate system of symbolic transference can achieve miracles of sensitiveness to a distant environment, and to a problematic future. But it pays the penalty, by reason of the dangerous fact that each symbolic transference may involve an arbitrary imputation of unsuitable characters. It is not true, that the mere workings of nature in any particular organism are in all respects favorable either to the existence of that organism, or to its happiness, or to the progress of the society in which the organism finds itself. The melancholy experience of men makes this warning a platitude. No elaborate community of elaborate organisms could exist unless its systems of symbolism were in general successful. Codes, rules of behaviour, canons of art, are attempts to impose systematic action which on the whole will promote favourable symbolic interconnections. As a community changes, all such rules and canons require revision in the light of reason. The object to be obtained has two aspects; one is the subordination of the community to the individuals composing it, and the other is the subordination of the individuals to the community. Free men obey the rules which they themselves have made. Such rules will be found in general to impose on society behaviour in reference to a symbolism which is taken to refer to the ultimate purposes for which the society exists.

It is the first step in sociological wisdom, to recognize that the major advances in civilization are processes which all but wreck the societies in which they occur:—like unto an arrow in the hand of a child. The art of free society consists first in the maintenance of the symbolic code; and secondly in fearlessness of revision, to secure that the code serves those purposes which satisfy an enlightened reason. Those societies which cannot combine reverence to their symbols with freedom of revision, must ultimately decay either from anarchy, or from the slow atrophy of a life stifled by useless shadows.

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